Ita'at-Ur-Rasul

Obedience to the Messenger

(Peace be upon him)



By Sheikh Yusuf Motala

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By
Maulana Taqi Al-Din Ahmed Nadvi Mazahiri

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE BENEFICENT, THE MERCIFUL

Praise be to Allah, lord of the worlds, and blessings and peace be upon the Chief of the Messengers – Muhammed , and all his descendants and Companions and those who conformed to him with utmost diligence, till the Day of Judgement!

Thereafter ... it is an occasion of great joy and pleasure for me to write a few lines by way of a Foreword and an Introduction to my dear friend Maulana Muhammad Yusuf Motala's valuable book entitled 'Itaat-Ur Rasul' (Obedience to the Messenger).

As he is busy in rendering the great service of calling people to Islam and Islamic education in the materialistic milieu of Europe, his sympathetic heart has correctly estimated the state of the Muslims' decline and degeneration. Such disgrace and adversity that, ‘He who chose the path contrary to the Prophet’s will never reach his destination."

His perturbed heart felt that the revival of the Islamic millat (community) is impossible without complete submission and obedience to the Holy Prophet . But this can be achieved only when, in respect of faith (iman), action, morals and behaviour, the Muslim becomes a walking specimen of the Holy Prophet's good example, and his life becomes a practical interpretation of the Quran - as that of a true believer (mumin) ought.

Urdu couplet, ‘No one knows this secret that the believer (mumin) looks a qari(reader) but in fact he is Quran himself.’

There are two things in Islam: the Book and the Sunnah. By the Book are meant Allah's commandments that have reached us through the holy Quran. - And the Sunnah which lexically means, ‘the way’ - that way through which the Holy Prophet passed acting upon Allah's commandments. That is, it is his practical example - the picture of which is present in the form of words in the Hadith law. In short, the thing that is necessary for a Muslim's success and spiritual perfection is the Prophetic Sunnah.

The Prophetic Sunnah is in fact an explanation and description of Allah's Book. The concise statements and difficult passages of the Quran cannot be explained fully and implemented practically without knowing the Holy Prophet's sayings, practices and conditions. He is the expounder of the divine purpose.

Allah Most High says: -

"And we have revealed unto thee the Remembrance that thou mayst explain to mankind that which hath been revealed for them, and that happily they may reflect." (XVI.44)

In the holy Quran there are commandments regarding ablution (wuzu), bathing (ghusl), prayer (salat), fasting (saum), surplus- wealth tax (zakat), pilgrimage to Mecca (hajj), recitation of blessings for the Prophet (Durud), invocation (dua), remembrance of Allah (zikr), and similarly, marriage (nikah), divorce, sale and purchase, morals and social life, national politics and settlement of quarrels and litigation. In short, all the religious commandments are present in it in absolute form, stated in a concise manner. But the explanation of these commandments and the details of their minutiae have been given by the Holy Prophet . Hence to follow and obey him is to follow and obey Allah. Accordingly there is explicit clarification in the holy Quran: -

"Whose obeyeth the messenger obeyeth Allah" (IV: 80).

Obedience to the Prophet Muhammad and conformance to his acts is as much necessary after him as it was during his auspicious lifetime. This point has been abundantly insisted upon in the Quran and the Hadith. The Holy Prophet's statement is: -

"I have left two things amongst you. As long as you keep them grasped firmly, you will not go astray. (They are) Allah's Book and my Sunnah." (Jame Bayan al-Ilm, with ref. to Mustadrik)

The Holy Prophet had brought a complete and perfect religion in the world. In his teaching there is a message for the human beings of every period and his Shari'ah (Code of life) gives guidance for every walk of life. From politics and statesmanship to the etiquette of convenience. He has taught the manners of all things.

There is a tradition in the Abu Da'ud Sharif, that a Jew sarcastically inquired of Hazrat Salman Farsi: "Your prophet has taught you the manners of istinja (washing or cleaning the private parts after easing nature) He replied: "Yes, yes. He has taught us

not to use less than three clods for instinja and has forbidden us to use the right hand for this work and has also forbidden the use of dung and bones for it. "

The point is that Hazrat Salman Farsi took pride before that Jew upon the comprehensiveness of the Holy Prophet's teachings even to include etiquette of convenience.

The more science is advancing, and scientific discoveries and inventions are coming to the fore, the truth of his teachings are further coming to light. It is because his teachings are meant to last till the last day, and have within them the provision for living life for all people of every period. His teachings abrogated all the previous laws (shari'ahs). Now there is absolutely no need to turn towards any other direction nor to go anywhere for cleaning instructions and guidance.

Hazrat Khwaja Muhammad Masum Sirhindi Naqshbandi describes the innovation (bid'ah) in a letter in the following manner; -

"Accordingly, the more a man tries in his conforming to the Sunnah and refraining from innovation, the more he will receive internal light, and the path towards the Holiest Presence will open up for him. The conformance to the Sunnah is indubitably the cause of salvation; it is beneficial in every way and a promoter of ranks; there is no probability of contradiction in it. But in all other things besides this there is danger upon danger; there is rather a satanic path in them. So abstain much from them and be fully cautious: because, after truth, what remains there but deviation? The firm religion, which has been proven through categorical revelation, cannot be forsaken merely because of absurd things and superstitions. The messenger's responsibility is to convey - and that is all."

The earliest bearers of the Holy Prophet's call to religion i.e. the holy Companions, who accepted his message and call and preserved it forever through their practice, inheritance and narration, were the practical embodiment of every feature and every aspect of his sacred life. According to them, the secret of their success and prosperity was hidden in submission and obedience to him; they had fully realised the fact that to deviate even to a hair's breadth from the Holy Prophet's way of life was conducive to failure and unhappiness in both the world and the Hereafter.

In battles, worldly affairs and on every occasion of life, the holy Companions held conformance to the Sunnah as an indispensable act, and thus they fully discharged the dues of their love for the Messenger of Allah.

It is stated within the Quran: -

"Of the believers are men who are true to that which they covenanted with Allah. Some of them have paid their vow by death (in battle), and some of them are still waiting; and they have not altered in the least." (XXXIII: 23)

Urdu Couplet: -

"We used to assert that we would not remain alive without you. Now we are going, fulfilling this vow too."

As a result of believing in him and obeying and following him such a revolution was wrought among the backward Arabian nation that within a short time the world witnessed magnificent personalities who were the wonders of their time and who have left indelible marks on the pages of the world history. This is Umar ibn al-Khattab. He used to graze his father's goats and the father often used to rebuke him. In respect of strength and ambition he was among the middle class of the Qurashites. He had had no unusual distinction to his credit and his contemporaries would not give him any extra-ordinary importance. But the same Umar, all of a sudden, sprang a surprise upon the whole world by his greatness and capability; he deprives Caesar and Khosroe of their thrones and crowns, and leaves behind such a specimen of justice and equity, piety and righteousness that will remain proverbial till the world lasts.

This is Waleed's son, Khalid. He is reckoned amongst the ambitious young men of the Quraish. He had earned a name by taking part in local battles but had no reputation outside the Arabian Peninsula. But after believing in the Holy Prophet and after adopting obedience and submission to him, he shines out as a heavenly sword (a sword amongst the swords of Allah). This divine sword falls as a bolt of lighting on Rum and Iran and leaves behind a trail of talk over the length and breadth of history.

These are Abu Obaydah bin al-Jarrah, Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas, and 'Amr bin al- Aas who proved to be so great commanders-in-chief and conquerors of the world that the awe of their victorious exploits still dominates the world. Khalid and Abu Obaydah drove out the Romans from Syria and assigned the trust-land of Abraham to the Muslims. 'Amr bin al-Aas forcibly seized Egypt, the Pharoah's land from the Romans. Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas took off the royal crown from Iran and Iraq and laid it at the feet of Islam.

This is Bilal the Ethiopian. In superiority, honour and venerability he reaches such a status that Hazrat Umar, the Commander of the Faithful calls him "my chief." These are Ali ibn Abi Talib and Hazrat Ayesha and Abd Allah ibn Mas'ud and Zaid ibn

Thabit and Abd Allah ibn Abbas. Nutured in the unschooled Prophet's ﷺ lap, they are counted amongst the greatest scholars of the world; rivers of knowledge flow from them and wisdom becomes current on their tongues.

These are Abu Zer, Miqdad, Ammar bin Yasir, Ma'az ibn Jabal and Ubby ibn Ka'b. A gust of the vernal air of Islam touches them and before long they come to be reckoned amongst the illustrious ascetics and glorious divines. All this was a blessing, of cherishing one’s love and obedience and submission to the Holy Prophet's ﷺ beloved personality that made these men of ordinary rank to be the leaders and imams of the world. Urdu couplets: -

‘No wonder if the moon and the Pleiades become my quarry, for I have tied my head to the saddle-strap of a fortunate man - that Sagacious One of the Ways, the Last of the Messengers, the Master of all, who bestowed the splendour of the valley of Sinai on the dust of the path.’

History is a witness to the fact that whenever a misfortune has befallen the Muslims individually or collectively, the cause, thereof, is some anti-sunnah practice of theirs or their indifference to the Sunnah. In the Battle of Uhad the Holy Prophet ﷺ had posted fifty archers at a pass and had warned them not to leave their station whether the Muslims were victorious or defeated in the battle. But when Allah Most High bestowed success and victory upon the Muslims, the archers deserted their post in spite of their commanders' insistence. The result was that the victory changed into defeat. In every age false powers and the agents of Satan (Iblis) have achieved success in their anti-Muslim expeditions only when they could succeed in deflecting the Muslims from the Holy Prophet's ﷺ path.

During the present age, particularly the way modern education is creating an atmosphere of disgust with religion amongst the new generations of Muslims, Infidelity (kufr) and Falsehood (batil) are succeeding in their purpose. Religious consciousness has become weak and the sparks of faith (iman) have been extinguished. Materialism, profiteering and derision at the religion and the Sunnah are the order of the day. Urdu couplets: -

"There is not a single Husain in the caravan of Hejaz, although the tresses of the tigris and the Euphrates are still curly." lqbal).

The young author's heart is restless and perturbed over this present pitiable plight of the Muslims. Hence he is calling the Muslims to religion with all the force at his command through this book. It says in a Hadith that walking on the same path, which the earliest people of the ummah had trodden, will reform the last people of this

ummah. Hence in this book he has described in detail the blessings of conforming to the Sunnah and the failure and loss of both the worlds on cold-shouldering or avoiding it. By the perusal of this book, Insha Allah, the Holy Prophet's ﷺ love and glory and the fervour for acting upon his Sunnahs will be created in the hearts, and there will be augmentation in the faith.

Maulana Yusuf Motala completed his education with great diligence, eagerness and zest at Madrasah Mazahir-e Ulum, Saharanpur. He is reckoned amongst the distinguished graduates of this institution. Here he passed his educational career under the kind shadow of my murshid (spiritual director), master and respectable teacher, Shaikh al-Hadith Maulana Muharnmad Zakariya. Because of his dutifulness and gentility, the Shaikh al-Hadith reserves an affectionate spot for him and hence it is but inevitable that some of the Shaikh's particulars and statements find their way in this book.

The lauded Maulana is at present principal of a religious madrasah in Bury Lancs. Many things are hoped from and expected of his person and his madrasah. If it is so willed by Allah, and the sympathisers of the community show interest and appreciation, his personality will prove true and his madrasah will become a great Islamic centre.

This is the first work of this young author. If it pleases Allah, with ageing and extensive reading maturity will appear in his knowledge and writing.

May Allah Most High bestow success on this first attempt of his and accept it! May He make this book beneficial for the Islamic community and exalt it (the community) with the wealth of conformance to the Sunnah! At the end I invoke as under. –

"0 Lord! Bestow upon the Muslim's heart that live longing that may agitate the soul and warm up the heart! Drive this aimlessly loitering deer towards the Haram (Sanctuary) again, and again give the expanse of the desert to this city- habituated one!”

PREFACE

In The Name Of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful
We Praise Allah and Send Blessings to the Noble Messenger

It was the intention of this humble self, on account of a dream, to write a treatise on the auspicious sunnah (practices) of the Chief of the Two Worlds ﷺ, but due to my own limited knowledge I was feeling diffident in setting pen to paper. When this year I had the good luck of coming from London to pass the holy month at Astana-e Khalili, it was during my stay here that the thought crossed my mind that in this auspicious month and at this blessed place, in this delightful gathering of Allah's friends, I should start this work.

Accordingly, on Friday, 26th Ramazan al-Mubarak, A.H. 1390, 1 started writing after the Friday prayer, in the devotional seclusion (a'itekaf) in the mosque. This humble writer has not happened to write any book or treatise before this, but in arranging this material I have taken advantage from different Arabic and Urdu books, and having completed it. Now I offer it to the readers. May Allah Most High, having pardoned my sins, bestow general popularity on this book and enrich and exalt this insignificant writer and the learned readers with the wealth of conformance to the Sunnah! 'This is not a hard thing for Allah.'

And peace be on you!

Muhammad Yusuf Motala,
Bolton, (U.K.)

In The Name Of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful
We Praise Allah and Send Blessings to the Noble Messenger

Request

It is my good fortune to have been entrusted with the publication of Ita`at-Ur-Rasul. With thanks to Hazrat Maulana Yusuf Motala's trustful soul, that an unworthy person like myself is even writing these few lines.

Glancing through the manuscript, I cannot but praise the hard work the translator has put in. All readers of Asian origin know that Urdu, Arabic and Persian languages are written from the opposite direction in contrast to English. Composition of coinciding words and phrases from these languages to English with precise meaning is like asking a British driver to drive on French roads. Our learned translator has done precisely that with the skill of a rally driver.

British born readers may find the book quite rich and definitive, quite contrary to any literary work. But then Hazrat Motala was not delving into literary professionalism. His work is sermonical and interprets his own regards and feelings for Sunnah and gives an insight into his own heart. Here notice the contrast between the intense spiritual communion of Hazrat Motala with the Prophetic Way and simultaneous corruption in our society. We understand his righteous indignation and bitter grief. The people have lost the bubbling faith of old and made the image of material world as primary object in their lives.

Notice how in each case only those points were referred to which are necessary in the argument at hand. A narrator whose object is mere narration tells the story in detail and is done with it. A consummate adherent whose object is to enforce lesson, brings out each point in its proper place, His object is not a story but a lesson. The instances, which have been related, should awaken the present and future generations that have inherited the Islam of the past. They should realise that if they fall into or defile the Sunnah, through their contumacy, they will meet with fate of "Jahanami'.'

It can never be possible for the likes of me to emphasise the reverend personality of Hazrat Motala. Opinion can be formed by individuals from the fact that after the sad demise of Shaikh-Al-Hadith Hazrat Maulana Mohammed Zakaria Kandhalvi, every one of us look upon Hazrat Motala as spiritual director and hold him in high esteem.

While reading this book, keep in mind the high station of Hazrat Motala's person and imagine that he is addressing a Majlis (gathering). My only request to readers who

cannot read Urdu and had not the opportunity of reading Ita`at-e Rasul in Urdu, is that: Keep in mind the main theme of the book. Ponder over every example so that it may give some idea as to how the holy companions, followers and our ancestors moulded their lives in the way of the Holy Prophet's ﷺ Sunnah and the order of The Holy Quran. Which was not seconded by anything, even their own life did not matter when it came to making a choice.

May be the text will feel a bit dry and perhaps littered with English vocabulary we have not read before. While proving the mastery of translator it also gives religious student the opportunity of knowing the equivalent English for Arabic words we use in our every day ritualistic life.

I am sure the translator could have made the work more easy going and Hazrat Motala consented me to change the script as I may see fit, however after long and assiduous head banging I could not bring myself to alter it more than a word or two here and there or at the most one or two paragraphs. Reason being the guiding inspiration that 'BARKAT' generated by dedicated beings like Hazrat Motala cannot be re-innated by anyone else. Allah Most High bestows upon whom he chooses.

I can only suggest to the readers of the English version to go through this book as a text, lesson by lesson. Analyse every paragraph, precisely read every page and if the need be keep a good dictionary close at hand. This way will give the full benefit of grasping the entire content and exercise will be educational too.

In today's occupationally taxing world we don't know how to spare ourselves from wrath of Allah to come. We believe in Islam, deep down we do not want to part with the precious inheritance and have our future generation known as Jack, Jill and Ivy, and yet we don't let a single stone unturned in bringing about the recognitions from the Joneses as 'Educated' 'Modern' and 'One of Us' like labels.

In the modern world we sacrificed lots of precious things, relations, belongings and what not, and now gambling away the rest of our possession we landed with. i.e. 'Iman'

But it is not too late yet - All that needs to be done, is to just put it into practice what your feelings are about your religion. No one in his or her right mind expects you to change and be a hermit over night. First of all weigh the value of life you are achieving for the price you are paying. Then begin with simple practice of Sunnah in your life slowly and steadily. From the beginning of the day to the end there are things which we do which has no meaning and the benefit is doubtful, the methods applied by today's being and the methods of Prophetic way are poles apart. Ultimate result is, even after timely gains of today's methods, despair and deprivation.

Islam as a Way of Life is Unique in Itself

There are prayers for every occasion. Sleeping and awakening, entering and leaving home, entering and leaving the mosque, before meal and after, morning and evening, wearing and taking off clothes, commencing the journeys and returning, seeing off, congratulating, visiting sick, condolences, giving charity and even when performing conjugal duties. Each and every one no more than a few words you can utter and time consumed in them is less than lighting a match or drinking a glass of water.

All you need to do is learn them, practice them and see the result. It is mine and all our learned Alims experience that if you have the will, help will be forthcoming. Where there is will there is a way. Once you start there is no telling what worldly and spiritual benefit you may end up with.

We are most lucky in a way that all these beneficial methods were passed on to us at no cost. Comparatively you don’t need to look very far but in your own modern surroundings where every new moon brings about a weird, cloth throwing, money grabbing, bearded disguise of a saint, luring modern men, women and children to God knows what sort of life. Some who has no aptitude to conform takes refuge in alcohol or drugs. We don’t need any thing - we already posses tried and proven methods of success.

In today’s British laws you are free to educate your children any way you wish but efforts are already afoot to change the education Act 1944 whereas no religious denomination school can remain exclusive. Hazrat Motala and few like him are engaged in salvaging the remnants of Islam in today’s society the result of which can be seen as monumental task of running Darul-Uloom in Bury or Tablighi Markaz in Dewsbury. There are many more such projects for the benefit of our coming generations and in fact every small town is struggling in its own way to salvage the souls of citizens of tomorrow. It is our obligation to see that all of them survive. Effort, money and material all must be spared, for that purpose.

It will not be out of place for me to quote an excerpt of the Holy Prophet's ﷺ saying; promising enormous benefit in life to come:

"To spend a farthing for the benefit of students is equal to spending gold equal in weight of Uhd mountain:'

"To learn an insignificant thing about religion, is worth more than thousand 'Nafil' prayers, even when you cannot act upon it.

Finally I conclude with the saying of Holy Prophet ﷺ:

"Wish the same for everyone as you wish for yourself:'

May Allah be pleased and give us all enlightenment to proceed in the right direction. Aameen.

Deen Merchant
Stoke-on-Trent
Staffordshire

England, 5th January 1985.

The Present Age of Mischief

To follow the Holy Prophet and conform to his way of life is extremely necessary, particularly in the present age. If one does not indisputably grasp the Sunnah with utmost steadfastness and constancy, not only one's faith (iman) and belief can be imperilled but one will also have to face the divine punishment for having abandoned the Sunnah. Today the world is in search of the lover of conformance to the Sunnah.

Urdu couplet: -

This age is in search of its Abraham; an idol-house this world is.
There's no deity but Allah. (Iqbal)

It is a pity that the Muslims' lifestyle today is poles apart from the Holy Prophet's way of life. The Muslims who have Allah's Book and the Holy Prophet good example with them. The Muslims who were the light of guidance for the world. The Muslims that when they happened to pass through any lane or street, atmosphere of the surroundings used to get enlightened with faith and action. The Muslims whose existence was a mercy for mankind. The Muslims for whom divine help and protection was accompanied everywhere.

It is due to this remoteness from the holy example that flames of opposition against them are blazing on all sides. The surface of the vast earth is getting narrower and narrower for them and even in those countries where they happen to have paramount power and government, they are almost dependent upon others. Among a large group of Muslims, particularly those, who have received modern education and are immersed in western civilisation and culture, there has arisen disgust with religion due to their lack of knowledge. Rather, there has everywhere come up a group that is antagonistic towards Islam and is prepared to uproot it. Wherever a call or movement is started in the name of Islam, efforts are caused to be made for suppressing it and to dispel its effects and influence, and endeavours are made to deflect the masses from it. Thus the whole community is a victim of moral degeneration, anarchy and chaos, and different kinds of cracks are showing in it. In the most recent past, hundreds of mischief like Qadianism, Parvizism, Disavowal of Hadith, etc. were born and are still taking birth every now and then. The main cause of this is that the Muslims' relation of love and conformance to the Holy Prophet has become weak and languid, and they have thrown the holy Companions' and the pious predecessors' way of life behind their own backs.

The Holy Companions' *radiyallahu anhum's* Rank and Status

The Holy Companions radiyallahu anhum are in fact the live versions of the sacred books of the Hadith and the Sunnah; their achievements are a just witness to their wisdom and modesty, justness, rectitude and piety. They were the earliest bearers of the religion and the Shari'ah (law) and it is through them that the religion and the Shari'ah have reached us. Although there is an abundance of proofs available in the Quran and the Hadith as regards these holy Companions' justness and sincerity, the irony is that even those people who feel no qualm in taunting and reproaching this sacred group are brassy enough to declare themselves to be the followers of Islam.

Allah Most High says:

"Allah hath pleasure in them and they have pleasure in Him" *(XCVIII: 8).*

The Holy Quran declares Allah's pleasure in them but the self-styled renovators of Islam, blindfolded as regards the holy Companions' eulogies and merits, have made them - Allah forbid! - The butt of reproach, objection and criticism!

The Holy Prophet's statement was: "My Companions are like stars. Whomsoever from amongst them you follow, you will have acquired guidance." He also said: "As regards my Companions, fear Allah, fear Allah. Don't make them the target of reproach after me. So, whoever loves them, he would love them on account of his love for me, and whoever shows enmity towards them would do so on account of his being an enemy to me."

Another statement is: "The best of all periods is my period (i.e., the holy Companions' period); then of those people who are near to them (i.e. the tabi' in - the followers of the Companions), and then of those who are near to them (i.e. the Tab' a Tabi'in - the Followers-on)".

As regards the justness of the holy Companions' group, Imam Abu Zar'ah Razi writes: "When you notice someone is detracting people, from anyone of the Holy Prophet's Companions, take it for granted that he is a zindiq (the criminal dissident); for the messenger is true, the Quran is true, and whatever the messenger has brought is true, and these facts were narrated to us by the holy Companions. But these criminal dissidents want to demolish our witnesses in order to falsify the Book and the Sunnah. Hence they are the more demolished (themselves)." (Fath al-Mughith, p.375).

Prediction Regarding the Mischief of the Disavowal of Hadith

Among the mischief on the horizon, of which the Holy Prophet ﷺ had already warned, was regarding the mischief of the disavowal (denial) of Hadith. He said: "Let me not find any man amongst you who may sit reclining against his cushion and when my order reaches him for doing or not doing a thing he may say: 'I don't know anything. We will follow whatever we find in Allah's Book'." (Tirmizi)

Similarly, it says in a report of the Abu Da'ud Sharif: - "Listen! The Quran was given to me and something more along with it. Listen! Shortly will come a time when an over fed, prosperous man, reclining against the cushion, will say: 'Conformance to the Quran alone is incumbent (wajib) upon you'." i.e. he will repudiate the Hadith.

He also stated: "One of you (in future), reclining against his cushion, would think that Allah hath prohibited only those things which have been mentioned in the Quran. Beware! By Allah! I too have given orders for many things and have given instructions and have forbidden many things; and they too are like those of the Quran and a little more."

Today the mischief of the disavowal of Hadith is spreading in the world like wild fire and thus the truth of whatever the Holy Prophet ﷺ had predicted is being witnessed by all.

Imitation of Modernism

The so-called renovators of Islam nurse malice and aversion towards the auspicious practices and blessed ways of Muhammad Mustafa . If a follower of the Sunnah happens to be in their company (majlis), they make him a butt of fun and ridicule, although these people themselves, having rebelled against the Master, have joined the ranks of the Holy Prophet's sallallahu alaihe wasallam enemies.

Allamah Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi, cautioning the Muslims' intellectual and practical imitators and slaves, writes: - "Our appearance, our inner and outer self, has become the showcase of subjugation and slavery. It is not an exaggeration but a fact that our way of life is bewitched by the glamour of slavery to.Modernism (*edited*). For the hairdos and trim of tash and whiskers we look up to our modern masters. Now we do not see anything; rather we see only that which Modernity shows us; we think only that which it makes us think; we understand only that which Modernity explains to us; we eat what it offers us to eat and drink what it gives for drinking. The extreme thing is that there are in our midst many who have made themselves dependent upon Modern guidance even in the modes of easing nature and cleaning (istinja). The greatest mischief among the ummah today is the mischief of freethinking. The condition of the higher strata among the ummah is such that their refractory selves shy at taking the bridle of religion into their mouths. They are willing to toil in the darkness and murkiness of infidelity (kufr) and atheism but they are averse to the light of that clean and shining religion which the Holy Prophet has brought. Instead of giving their hands into the hands of Allah's and the Prophet's lovers who are cloistered in hospices, in order to warm up their hearts with the blazing fire of true love, they are ready to get their hearts rusted by following into the Satan's footsteps. About such hearts the divine statement is:

"Nay, but that which they have earned is rust upon their hearts" (LXXXIII: 14)

And they are satisfied with their self-formulated decisions, but they try to avoid acting upon the decisions of the Quran, the Sunnah and the Holy Prophet . Rather, when the divine commandments and the prophetic instructions, which are contrary to their selves and disposition and against those things towards which their leader Satan calls them, are mentioned before them they begin to talk such nonsense that thereafter they have no right to call themselves Muslims or to claim Islam. As if these people go over to that group about which it has been stated in a Hadith as follows: -"At the Fountain of Kauser I am seeing those men who will come to me. But, by Allah!, some of them will be prevented from coming to me. Then I will say: '0 Lord! these are my Companions.' Then the answer will be received: 'you don't know what they did after

you; they invented new actions and views, and they kept walking on their heels (i.e., in the reverse direction)." By these are meant the same Muslims who succeeded the Holy Prophet ; they did not follow the Book and the Sunnah; and giving a loose rein to their corrupt reason and thought not only did they go astray but also misled others. Thus they were deprived of Allah's light and His bounties and became the means of spreading deviation and backsliding."

Look Back To the History of 1400 Years

If the Muslims today want to make religious and secular progress, they will have to revert to the era of 1400 years ago. As much as they go on adapting their methods of government and administration, worldly dealings and social life to the ways and methods of the Holy Prophet 's time, they will make progress accordingly; and as much as there is shortfall and drawback, there will be that much loss in religion and secular progress. The Muslims' progress depends upon the Book and the Sunnah. It was by acting on these that they became dominant over the world in a short time. And it was due to the same electric power that they shone in the battlefields of Badr and Qadisiah, although externally, in numbers and material resources they were far inferior to their enemies. The leader of this caravan, the Holy Prophet, and his household had to starve day in day out. It is reported by Hazrat Ayesha radiyallahu anha that members of Muhammad's household never ate barley bread to their fill continuously for two days until the Holy Prophet died.

The Holy Prophet perhaps might never have seen sifted flour; and at the time of the Battle of the Ditch he had tied stones on his stomach to suppress hunger. When such was the Master's condition, it is obvious what must have been the condition of his slaves. But Allah Most High bestowed upon him such success and good fortune that none has achieved so far nor will ever achieve.

The Incomparable Success

The cause of this success and good fortune and all those victories was the religion brought by the Holy Prophet ﷺ and conformance to his methods. It is the holy Companions' unusual achievement that within a short time not only did they learn a religion and its methods, which were quite new to them, but they also acted upon it and demonstrated to the world with their action what conformance and action should truly be.

In return and as a reward for this Allah Most High declared the perfection of Islam at their hands: "This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favour unto you, and have chosen for you as religion AL-ISLAM (‘The Surrender’ to Allah)."

What a great human excellence it was, for it was a new action and an unusual method for them, but acting upon it they brought it to perfection. Allah Most High will bestow upon them its real reward in the Hereafter, but a nominal glimpse of it they were shown in this world also, although this reward compared to the rewards of the Hereafter is simply insignificant. But on account of their labours and their assiduousness for religion, Allah Most High exalted them in this world too, details of which Allamah Ibn Kathir has described in his exegesis (Tafsir) at one place.

It is the very same Islam, not a single serif of which will change till the Day of judgement. Allah Most High gave dominance to the followers of the same religion of Islam over the infidels and from the east to the west they went galloping their horses and trampled much of the land of the world under their horses' hoofs; they won country after country in a canter, and the necks of great despots and refractory potentates bent down before them. Caesar's and Khosroe's riches and treasures were laid at their feet, and victory and booty began to kiss their stirrups. The mighty and brilliant empire of Iran was conquered and its blazing fire-temples cooled down before the resplendence of Islam. The equally mighty Caesar's throne and crown were brought under subjection and the enormous wealth of these two super-powers of that period, these servants of Allah spent wholeheartedly and lavishly to win Allah's pleasure and to spread His true Prophet's religion; and the people saw Allah's and the Prophet's promises coming true like the fourteenth-night moon. The vilifiers of Prophet Jesus’ name - the worshippers of devils under his holy name -, compelled at the hands of the true worshippers of Allah, handed the blooming and pullulating gardens and populous towns of Syria to them and rushed to take shelter in Rome. From there too they were turned out with disgrace and reached Constantinople along with the supporters of their king, but from there also the Muslims drove them out with ignominy and humiliation.

But today the Umma-e Muhammadiya, because it has turned from its platform and has turned away its face from the religion brought by their true Prophet ﷺ by his sunnah, by way of punishment for its misdeeds, has again been put under their domination, by the Holy, Powerful, Omnipotent and Just Lord - and it was indeed a demand of His justice too - so that the Umma-e Muhammadiya may feel and perceive its own error and may again return to its original view-point and true religion, as Hazrat Maulana Mahmud Hasan Shaikh al-Hind Deobandi has said:- (Urdu couplet):

"Hearken! The vicissitudes of the world are the Lord's sermonisers.
From every change comes the sound: 'understand; understand'."

The Last Splendour of Islam

The ummah, however, - Insha Allah - will shortly come back to the right course, because it has always happened so in history that, whenever this ummah deviated from its path, the soundless divine staff, driving it from all the four sides, brought it to the right track. Now, Insha Allah, that day is not far off when the spiritual power of Islam will again radiate and the vernal air of Islam will again blow, and the whole world, particularly the religion-weary inhabitants of the modern world will humbly bow their heads to its truth or seek comfort with those who bow their heads. With the advent of this auspicious period, Islam and the followers of Islam, Insha Allah, will successfully thrive till the Day of judgement and all the religions having come to an end, the religion of Islam alone will remain supreme.

The Chief of all the Truthful Ones whose truthfulness has had a divine seal on it, that is, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has given this information which is inevitable and in which there is no possibility of any change. There is prediction of a great war which will put an end to all the religions except Islam and then Allah alone will be worshipped, as it says in one Hadith -"The Word of Unity (Kalima-e Tauhid) alone will remain; then Allah Alone will be worshipped."

We also pray that Allah's help may accompany this ummah in this period and give it supreme success in the world and may also give understanding to all the people of the ummah that neither they may worship anyone but Allah nor obey anyone else besides Muhammad the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Urdu Half-verse:

"The claim of love is there alright,
but where is its proof?"

The divine statement in the Holy-Quran is: -

"Say, (O Muhammad, to mankind): If ye love Allah, follow me; Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. Say: Obey Allah and the messenger. But if they turn away, lo! Allah loveth not the disbelievers (in His guidance)"(III:3 1-2).

It says in a tradition that when the Jews boasted that ***"We are sons of Allah and His loved ones"*** (V: 18), the aforesaid verse Allah Most High revealed that "if ye love Allah, follow me; Allah will love you," But when the Holy Prophet sallallahu alaihe wasallam presented this verse before the Jews, they refused to accept it.

Allamah Ibn Kathir, commenting upon this verse, writes that the man who claims to love but his actions, words and beliefs are not in accordance with the Muhammadan Law and the prophetic commandments and he does not act according to the Muhammadan method, then he is false in his claim. It says in an authentic tradition that the Holy Prophet ﷺ says that "the man who does an action for which we have not ordered, it is rejectable".

Hence here too it is stated that "If you are true in your claim of having love for Allah, then live according to my way of life. For this Allah will give you more than your longing". That is, He will Himself become your lover, as some divine scholars and wise men have written that your loving Him is nothing; the true joy is when Allah may begin to love you. In short, the token of love for Allah is that one keep conformance to the Sunnah in theory and practice.

Ibn Abi Hatim reports from Hazrat Ayesha (radiyallahu anha) in an unsustained hadith - but its contents are true - that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that "religion consist only in love for the sake of Allah and enmity for the sake of Allah" Then he recited the verse: "and Allah will forgive you your sins"(III: 3l). That is, Allah Most High will forgive the sins of all if they conform to the prophetic Sunnah. Then the order is given to all the high and the low that they carry on complying with the divine and the prophetic orders. Those who retreat from it (order), that is those who turn away from obeying Allah and His Apostle, they are the unbelievers and Allah does not love them. (Tafsir-e Ibn Kathir, vol.1, p.358). It becomes clear and explicit from this that opposition to the Allah's Apostle's way is blasphemy (kufr).

These opponents cannot be the friends of Allah; they may orally claim love but unless they do not comply with and follow Allah's true Prophet, (the Apostle of the Mankind and the Genii and the Last of the Messengers) and do not conform to his sunnahs, they are false in their claim. (No Prophet or Apostle could help but conform to the Holy Prophet .

Allah Most High has conferred such a high station on the Holy Prophet . Arabic Couplets:-

Other friends depart and their substitutes are found but there is no substitute for the Illustrious Master,
though he is not before our eyes, his merits cannot be far from ours.

Allah Most High hath conferred such a high station on the Holy Prophet that had other prophets and resolute apostles been alive today, they too could not have helped but act according to his shari'ah (law). The One and Peerless Allah had taken a covenant for this from all the other holy prophets: - When Allah made (His) covenant with the Prophets, (He said);

"Behold that which I have given you of the Scriptures and knowledge. And afterward there will come unto you a messenger affirming that which you possess. You shall believe in him and ye will help him. He said: Do you agree to it and take this my covenant as binding upon you! They answered: We agree. He said: Then bear ye witness. I will be a witness with you. Then whosoever after this shall turn away: they will be miscreants" (III: 81-82).

Commenting upon these verses Allamah Ibn Kathir writes that Allah Most High had taken a covenant from all the prophets, right from Prophet Adam to Prophet Jesus, that whenever anyone of them would be given the Scripture and knowledge and he reached a high position, and if the last of the prophets of Allah happened to come during his time, it would be obligatory upon the former to believe in him and help him; and not that in view of his own knowledge and prophethood he might stop helping and conforming to the prophet coming later. Allah asked all of them if they were making a covenant and a firm promise with Him. When all the prophets said that they did make a covenant, Allah asked them to bear witness as He too would be a witness, and also warned them that whoever would recant from this promise and covenant, he would be absolutely sinful, immoral, refractory and a wrongdoer.

Hazrat Ali and Hazrat Ibn Abbas (radiyallah anhum) say that Allah Most High had taken a covenant from every prophet that, if Allah sent His Chosen Prophet Muhammad during any prophet's lifetime, it would be a duty of the covenanting

prophet to believe in him and help him, and also inculcate his own ummah to believe in him and obey him.

Proceeding further, Allamah Ibn Kathir has quoted a tradition from Musnad e Imam Ahmed that Hazrat Umar (radiyallah anhu) said: - "0 Apostle of Allah! I had asked a Jewish friend of mine who belonged to the Banu Quraizah to write down for me the comprehensive things of the Torah. If you permit me I may present them to you." The Holy Prophet's luminous face changed. Hazrat Abdullah bin Thabit said to Hazrat Umar: "Don't you see what is the expression on the holy face"? Perceiving the situation, Hazrat Umar at once uttered: "I'm pleased at Allah's being the Lord, at Islam's being the religion and at Muhammad's being the messenger (Tafsir lbn Kathir, ii, p.467). Then the Holy Prophet's anger subsided and he said: "I swear by Him in Whose charge is my life that should Moses come amongst you, and you start complying with him and give up following me, you will go astray. From amongst all those ummahs you are among the ummah that has been allotted to me and from amongst all the prophets I am the prophet who hath been assigned to you."

There is a tradition from Musnad-e Abu Y'ala to the effect: "Don't ask anything from the scriptures (Ahl-e kitab). They are themselves astray. Nor will they show you the right path? On the contrary, it is just possible that you might confirm something false or might falsify something true. By Allah! Even if Moses were alive amongst you, he would have had no other way but to conform to me."

So it is proved that our Holy Prophet is the Last of the Messengers and the Chief of the Prophets. Conformance to him was obligatory when he was commissioned as a prophet and to believe in and confirm him and follow and obey him is as much obligatory for all the human beings, till the last day, as it was then.

The Distinctive Grandeur of the Chief Of Both the Worlds

This was the reason that on the auspicious occasion of the Ascent (Ma 'eraj), he was made the Imam (leader) of all the prophets at Bayt al-Muqaddas. Similarly, on the Day of Judgement, too, it will be he who will act as an intercessor to implore Allah Most High to give His judgements. This is the same Lauded Station (Maqam-e Mahmud) which does not befit anyone but him. All the eminent prophets and holy messengers, on that day, will not dare to act as the intercessor. Alas only he alone will stand at that station. Allamah Shehab al-Din Ibn Hajar al-Haithami al-Makki says that Allah Most High hath bestowed upon him all kinds of superiority over all other prophets and messengers. Of these, three are quite clear and apparent, ordinarily his special qualities would require volumes upon volumes for description, but here I try to describe the important peculiarities only:-

The First Special Notability

He was called for Ascent (Ma 'eraj) with the corporeal (lit. external) body and this honour has not been achieved by any one save our Holy Prophet the Chosen Muhammad and the glory of his singularity is also displayed by the honours and dignity with which he was called. In Bayt al-Muqaddas he was made the imam (for leading the prayer) of all the angels and the prophets. When the prayer was over, Hazrat Jibra'il introduced all the prophets to him and they all Congratulated him and paid tributes of praise. Then Prophet Abraham, praising the partnerless Lord, said: "Allah Alone deserves laudation Who made me His Khalil (intimate friend) and bestowed upon me a vast spiritual realm, and made me an obedient ummah (as though one obedient man is equal to thousands of obedient men); and exalted me with His messages and took me out from Nimrud's fire and made it cool and the cause of safety for me."

Then Prophet Moses said: "All praise is for that Lord Who made me His Kalim (i.e., gave me the privilege of speaking with Himself) and exalted me; and revealed the Torah upon me and accomplished Pharoah's destruction and the Israelites' emancipation at my hands."

Then Prophet David said: "Allah Alone is worthy of praise Who invested me with Kingdom, revealed the Psalms (Zabur) upon me, made iron soft for me and made mountains subservient to me so that they and the birds used to glorify the Lord along with me; and bestowed upon me common sense and the capacity for deciding cases".

Then Prophet Solomon said: "Allah Alone deserves praise Who subjugated the winds, the genii and the humans to me and made satans obedient to me so that they used to make whatever I wished them to make - like fortresses, statues, pond-like troughs and cauldrons that would remain fixed at a place and would not admit any shaking. And He taught me the language of the animals and flowed a stream of molten copper so that I did not have to melt it and got made large vessels at the hands of the genii, and He bestowed on me such a vast empire which does not befit anyone."

Prophet Jesus said: "Allah Alone is worthy of praise for He gave me knowledge of the Torah and the Bible and made me such that, by Allah's order, I could heal the stone-blind and the lepers and revive the dead to life, and He lifted me to the sky and kept me safe from the infidels' deceit and evil, and gave me and my mother shelter from the condemned Satan and never allowed Satan to have any power over us."

After all had spoken, Muhammad Mustafa ﷺ began and said: "You all have lauded your Lord and so I too eulogise my Lord that Allah Alone is worthy of praise who sent me as mercy for the whole universe and as a harbinger of good and a warning for all the human beings, and He revealed the Quran unto me in which there is mention of every necessary thing, and He made my ummah better than all other ummahs that came to this world, and made my ummah the middle ummah, and made my ummah such that as regards honour it precedes all and as regards appearance it is the last of all. he caused my bosom to dilate and eased me of my burden and exalted my remembrance; and me alone. He (by the award of prophethood) made first and (as regards advent) the last'.'
(Tafsir-e Ibn Kathir, vol. iii, p.18).

Then Prophet Abraham alaihis salaam addressed all the prophets and said: "It is on account of these merits that Allah Most High hath given superiority to Muhammad ﷺ over you." This long hadith about the Holy Prophet's ﷺ superiority over all other prophets has been mentioned by Allamah Ibn Kathir. Since in this Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has himself mentioned his notabilities, there remains nothing to write about. But the Arabic-knowing persons and religious scholars know full well how concise and succinct are the Holy Prophet's ﷺ sentences, for while the other prophets mentioned their miracles instead of their specialities, the Holy Prophet ﷺ described only the latter. Moreover, in accordance he has expressed in a

few words so many meanings as if he has filled up the sea in a cup, and it is truly a fact that the words of kings are the kings of words. Even as he has had leadership over all the prophets, human beings and the jinni, his words command superiority over all other words.

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The Second Special Nobility

The second special and important feature amongst his special features is his leadership over all mankind and the genii. He is the chief of all the prophets and messengers, rather, the entire human species and the genii. The Sovereign of the Two Worlds and the Pride of the Two Worlds, the Confirmer and the Confirmed One, whose truthfulness has been evidenced even by enemies and of which the One and Partnerless Lord Himself is a witness, has said: -

(1) "I am myself the leader of mankind on the Day of Justice and I am not proud of it. The Banner of Divine Praise shall be in my hands and on this too I take no pride, and the whole mankind, rather the entirety of creatures, shall be under my banner and of this too I am not proud."

(2) It is stated in another Hadith: - "I am the Friend (Habib) of Allah and I do not take pride on it and it is I who will be holding the Banner of Divine Praise but I am not proud of it, and it is I who shall be the first intercessor whose intercession will be accepted first and yet I do not pride over it. And I will be the first to knock at the door of Paradise which Allah Most High will get opened for me and at that time the poor believers will be with me; and I am the most respectable amongst all the ancient and the modern ones but I don't take pride on it."

(3) It is stated in another Hadith: - He reports it from Gabriel and Gabriel from Allah Most High that Allah Most High told His prophet: "I have specially obliged and rewarded you with seven things : the first amongst them all is that I, in My View, have not created anyone more respectable than you in the heavens and the earth."

(4) It is stated in another Hadith: - He states that the Angel Gabriel told him: "There is glad tidings and good news for you that you are most superior amongst all the creation of Allah Most Glorious, and accept this good news that Allah Most High hath saluted you in such a manner in which He hath never saluted any favourite angel nor any commissioned prophet; and the Beneficent Most High hath fixed a rank for you near the highest heaven which was neither given to any inhabitant of the skies nor any

denizen of the earth to reach there so far. May Allah Most Glorious make this great post and His salutation auspicious for you"!

It is reported from Hazrat Abu Huraira in Bukhari Sharif: "On the Day of Judgement I will be the leader of all mankind." It says in Baihaqi's tradition: "I'm the chief of the whole world."

Due to this position of leadership he will be awarded the "Lauded Station" on the Day of Judgement, and gracing that post he will request and intercede in the Divine Court to begin the audit of all the creatures. This is the Supreme Intercession and this intercession will be made on that day when all the human beings and enterprising (commissioned) prophets will approach Prophet Adam, Prophet Noah, Prophet Abraham, Prophet Moses and Prophet Jesus and will appeal to them to request Allah Most Glorious that "either take our account or throw us into Hell for we cannot bear the severity of this place." At this each one of the enterprising prophets, remembering something about themselves, will say Nafsi, nafsi" (I'm concerned about myself, I'm concerned about myself). But on that day and at that time, our Master and Chief, His Holiness Muhammad will say: "ana laha, ana laha" (I'll perform this, I'll perform this"). All the creatures on that day will be in need of his glance of magnanimity; their high ones as well as their low ones; their great prophets as well as their messengers. On that day, for that supreme intercession, none save our Holy Master shall be able to say anything. Hazrat Anas reports that the Holy Prophet said:

"Standing there I will be waiting for my ummah that it may easily cross the Bridge when, all of a sudden, will approach Prophet Jesus and say: '0 Muhammad these great prophets have come to you for this reason that you may invoke that Allah Most High may disperse this multitude of all the ummahs from this plain of resurrection, and send them, as per the load of their sins, to the places where they are to be sent, because the people are drowning in perspiration'. However, perspiration will be flowing like catarrh from the believer, but death will be almost throttling the unbeliever (Kafir). The Holy Prophet will say:- '0 Jesus! Wait here. I will return quickly.' Saying this the Holy Apostle will go and stand under the Divine Throne. Accordingly, he will receive that proximity to Allah that neither any favourite angel could get nor any prophet nor any apostle. Then Allah Most High will tell holy Gabriel to tell Muhammad : "Raise your head and ask. Whatever you request will be granted, intercede; and for whomsoever you intercede, your intercession will be admitted.

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The Third Special Notability

The third notability of His Holiness the Prophet which Allamah Ibn Hajar al-Haithami al-Makki has mentioned concerns those innumerable miracles of his which will last forever:

"And by way of a miracle, the Quran itself is sufficient which will last till the approach of the Day of Doom; and in itself the Holy Prophet's countless miracles and unlimited merits and praises have been described'.'

Allamah Sa'duddin Taftazani's Argument

Allamah Sa'duddin Taftazani, reasoning with the divine statement…

"Ye are the best community that hath been raised up for mankind," (III:110)

…states that this ummah's being better than all other ummahs is due to the Holy Prophet's perfection in religion, and the excellence of this ummah is subject to its prophet's excellence, whom the ummah follows and conforms to. So, had he not been (God forbid!) superior to all other prophets, then his ummah too would not have been the best of all the communities. And this verse of the Holy Quran is clearly showing that this ummah is superior to all other ummahs, and hence the Prophet, who is of this ummah too, is superior to all other prophets, because correlation between these two is quite evident. In short, he is superior too and greater than all the eminent prophets in each quality of perfection.

It is for this reason that while Allah Most Glorious has addressed other great prophets with their names, He has not addressed our Lord and Master, the Holy Prophet by his name; he has rather been addressed with any one of his high qualities like '*Ya Ayyahun-Nabio*' (O Prophet), '*Ya ayyahur-Rasulo*' (O messenger), '*Ya ayyhul-Muzzammilo*' (O the Enshrouded One), '*Ya ayyhaul-Mudath-thiro*' (O the Cloaked One), etc.

Imam Razi's Argument As Regards the Prophet's ﷺ Superiority

As regards his superiority over all other great prophets, Imam Razi, arguing on the basis of the divine statement:

"Such is the guidance of Allah wherewith He guideth whom He will of His bondmen" (VI: 89), states that Allah Most High endowed all the great prophets and messengers with praiseworthy qualities which were individually in them, but when he ordered the Holy Prophet ﷺ to lead all of them, all the individual qualities they had been endowed with, were collected in the Holy Prophet's ﷺ auspicious person; and thus he became superior to all other prophets.

'What the other beauties possess totally, you possess them alone."

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His Unique Dignity

Among the Holy Prophet's special distinctive qualities is also this, that Allah Most High exalted him with a universal prophetic mission. Neither of the great prophets and messengers who had preceded him had been commissioned with a universal mission and call. They were sent to particular communities or particular regions, whereas he had been sent as a prophet for the whole human race, as has been mentioned in several places in the Quran. Allah Most High states:

"Blessed is He Who hath revealed unto His slave the Criterion of (right and Wrong), that he may be a warner to the people" (XXV:I)

Concerning this verse Allamah Ibn Kathir writes that it means that he should preach this book to the whole world, warn all, black or white, distant and close, from Allah's punishment He has been sent on a mission towards all those who are under this sky and above this earth, as Allah Himself says: -

"Say (O Muhammad): O mankind! Lo! I am the messenger of Allah to you all (The messenger of) Him unto whom belongeth the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth" (VII: 158).

Interpreting this verse Allamah Ibn Kathir says that it means: "0 Prophet! Say to Arabia and Iran and all the peoples of the world that you have come as a messenger

towards all." This is his greatest honour and glory that the office of prophethood ceased with him and he will remain as prophet for the whole world till the last day.

It is also reported in one tradition that during the Battle of Tabuk when the Holy Prophet got up to say the night prayer, some of his Companions began to guard him. After saying the prayer, he turned towards them and said: "Five things have been specially bestowed upon me tonight; these distinctive qualities were never given to any other prophet before me: -

(1) I have come as a prophet for all the peoples of the world, while before this every prophet used to come as prophets for his own people only.

(2) I am victorious over the enemy merely by reverence, an enemy that is a month's travel away is overcome by my reverential fear.

(3) Booty has been legitimised for me and my ummah, before, it was a grave sin to eat the booty; it used to be burnt up.

(4) The whole earth is ritually clean for me and is a mosque for me. Wherever comes the time of prayer, I can perform tayyamum (ablution performed by using dust in the absence of water) with the dust thereof and can say prayer on the same dust. On the contrary earlier people could worship only in their churches and places of worship.

(5) The fifth special distinction is this that I have been permitted to ask for one thing, as every prophet has requested for a thing of his liking. I have postponed my demand for the Day of Judgement, and it is for you and for every one who may give witness of the Oneness of Allah.

One can write volume upon volumes on this topic and yet it will not suffice, as Sheikh Sa'di has said: -

"The whole volume came to an end and life too reached its end and yet we are still toiling with the description of your first quality only."

We only want to point out that Allah created us amongst the ummah of such a chosen and beloved prophet for which great and enterprising prophets used to yearn. How wicked not to follow and conform to such a prophet. The Attention of Muslims has repeatedly been drawn towards this.

Allah Most High, giving the order for obeying Him and the Holy Prophet, says in the Quran: -

"0 ye who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the messenger and those charged with the authority among you; and if ye differ in any matter amongst yourselves, refer it to Allah and His apostle if ye do believe in Allah and the Last Day. That is best and most suitable in the end." (IV:59).

In an interpretation of this noble verse Allamah Ibn Kathir has written a detailed article. In it at one place, he says that it is reported in an authentic Hadith: "He who obeys me obeys Allah and he who disobeyed me, disobeyed Allah, and he who obeyed my amir (chief) he obeyed me and he who disobeyed the amir appointed by me he disobeyed me."

In this noble verse we are asked to obey Allah, that is, to follow His Book and obey the Apostle of Allah. We should conform to the Prophet's ﷺ Practices (Sunnahs) and also obey the rulers. Obedience to the rulers is only in conformity with Allah’s order and not in anything contrary. It is unlawful to obey the ulemas or amirs at such a time. It is stated in the Hadith that obedience is desired in the known things only; and within the extent of Allah's and the Apostle's order. There is no obedience to creatures in a thing which there may be disobedience to Allah.

His Holy Being Is the Arbitrator in Controversial Matters

"And if ye have a dispute concerning a matter, refer it to Allah and the messenger if ye are (in truth) believers in Allah and the Last Day." (IV: 59)

Meaning that if any dispute arises in any matter, one should refer it to Allah, i.e. to the Book of Allah and the Prophet's ﷺ Sunnah.

The order is being given here in clear and explicit terms that whenever the people dispute in any matter, whether it concerns the principle of religion or any branch of religion, the only way of deciding it is to take Allah's Book and the Prophet's ﷺ Sunnah as the arbitrator. And whatever is met with therein should be accepted without question. So, whatever order is given by the Book and the Sunnah, and whichever problem is evidenced by them as true, that alone is right and true and all else is false.
Allah Most High says in the holy Quran: -

"So after the Truth, what else can there be, save error!" (X:32)

The instruction here too is the same that if you are true in believing in Allah and the Last Day, then of whichever matter you are not aware, or you have dissent in any proposition, or entertain divergent views in a matter, you should refer it to Allah's Book and the Prophet's Hadith for decision, and believe in whatever there is in both of them.

So, it is proved from this noble verse that the man who does not refer controversial matters for decision to the Book and the Sunnah does not believe in Allah and the Last Day. Similarly, the same has been shown to be the purpose of the revelation of the Quran in itself:

"Lo! We reveal unto thee the Scripture with the truth, that thou mayst judge between mankind by that which Allah showeth thee" (IV: 105)

Sincere Agreement with the Decision Of The Quran And The Sunnah Is Necessary

"And if ye have a dispute concerning a matter, refer it to Allah and the messenger if ye are (in truth) believers in Allah and the Last Day." (IV: 59)

It is known from the above verses that in their mutual disputes the Muslims should make the Quran and the Sunnah their arbitrators and then whatever is decided it should be acknowledged sincerely i.e. there should be no grievance. Should one feel torment, then one should diagnose one's disease; that there is weakness in faith and certitude, and there is still a taint of sensualism, for this is a sign of hypocrisy. As such, the divine statement regarding the Hypocrites is as under: -

"Hast thou not seen those who pretend that they believe in that which is revealed unto thee and that which was revealed before thee, how they would go for judgement (in their disputes) to false deities when they have been ordered to reject them? Satan would mislead them far astray. And when it is said unto them: Come unto that which Allah hath revealed and unto the messenger, thou seest the hypocrites turn from thee with aversion. How would it be if a misfortune smote them because of that which their own hands sent before (them)? Then would they come unto thee, swearing by Allah that they were seeking naught but harmony and kindness. Those are they, the secrets of whose hearts Allah knoweth. So oppose them and admonish them, and address them in plain terms about their souls." (IV: 60-63).

In these verses Allah Most High has falsified the claim of those people who orally admit that they believe in all the former Books and the Quran but when they have to ascertain a problem or have to remove a dissent or have to decide a quarrel, they do not refer to the Book and the Sunnah but rather resort to other things. These verses have in fact been revealed regarding two men who had had a dissension. One was a Jew and the other a Muslim. The Jew was insisting upon going to the Holy Prophet whereas the Muslim wanted to take him to K'ab bin Ashraf (a prosperous and powerful Jew). It is also said that these verses have been revealed regarding those Hypocrites who used to make a show of Islam but covertly they wished to incline towards Ignorance. Besides this, there are two other interpretative statements also. However, the verse, as regards its order and words, is common and covers all those events; it expresses the censure for and evil of every man who, desisting from the Quran and the Sunnah, goes towards falsehood for decision.

There are three Reasons for Avoiding The Decision of the Quran and The Sunnah

This topic has been more clearly mentioned at another place in the Quran. The divine statement is as follows: -

"And they say: We believe in Allah and the messenger, and we obey; then after that a faction of them turn away thereafter, such are not believers. And when they appeal unto Allah and His messenger to judge between them, lo! A faction of them is averse. But if right had been with them they would have come unto him willingly. Is there in their hearts a disease, or have they doubts or fear lest Allah and His messenger should wrong them in judgement? Nay, but such are evildoers." (XXIV: 47-5O).

The Hypocrites are being described that with their tongues they admit faith and obedience but in their hearts they are against it. Their action and their words vary. The reason is that there is no faith in their hearts. When they are called towards guidance and asked to follow the Quran and Hadith, they turn away their faces and display arrogance. Whenever they see personal gain in the religious law they express their connection with Islam, and when they sense that the shar'i decision is against their personal desire, and is opposed to worldly gain, they do not even pay attention towards the truth.

Such people, therefore, are the real unbelievers, because they are not free from three states: either unbelief has settled in their hearts or the religion and shari'at are suspect in their eyes, or they are afraid that perhaps Allah and the Prophet might deprive them of their right; and all these three are the forms of infidelity itself. Allah knows each one of them. Whatever is hidden underneath is open, manifest and known to Allah. In fact these people are immoral (fajir) and tyrannous.

Allah Most High and His Apostle ﷺ are holy. There were many such unbelievers during the Holy Prophet's ﷺ time. Such apparent Muslims are called Munaf'iqin (Hypocrites). Whenever they visualised their objectives being achieved through the Quran and the Hadith, they would bring their disputes and litigation before the Holy Prophet ﷺ. When the fulfilment of their purpose was achievable elsewhere they would avoid prophetic court. This subject is fully discussed in the above-mentioned verse.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ said that if two disputing persons are urged to get their dispute settled according to Islamic law, and one who does not accept it is wrong and unjust.

The True Muslims

The dignity of the true Muslims is described in the following verse:

"The promise of (all true) believers, when they appeal unto Allah and His messenger to Judge between them, is only that: We hear and we obey. And such are the successful. "He who obeyeth Allah and His messenger, and feareth Allah, and keepeth duty (unto Him): such indeed are the victorious" (XXIV: 51-52).

The true believer's dignity is that beside Allah's Book and the Holy Prophet's ﷺ Sunnah they do not consider anything else as part of religion.

They hear only the Quran and the Hadith and the moment the call is heard, they respond: ‘We heard and we obeyed,’ and they are the successful and victorious.

Hazrat ‘Obadah radiallahu anhu's Will

Hazrat ‘Obadah (radiallahu anho) was a Badrian Companion and leader of the Ansar. On his deathbed, he summoned his nephew Junadah ibn Ansar, and said: Come and listen to what you are accountable to,

‘The Sunnah and the Deposit (amanat). Through thick and thin or in agony, even when your rights are assigned to others, keep in line with justice and veracity. Don't deprive the competent of work. Never believe anything you hear contrary to Allah's Book. Follow Allah's Book consistently.’

Hazrat Abul Darda says:

‘There is no Islam without obedience to Allah. Virtue lies in assembly (Jamat), in obedience to Allah, His Apostle, Caliph of Muslims and in well wishing of Muslims at large.’

The Pivot of Faith

Allah Most High says in Quran:

"But no, by thy Lord, they can have no faith until they make thee judge in all disputes between them and find in their souls no resistance against thy decisions, but accept them with fullest conviction" (IV: 65).

In this noble verse Allah Most High, swearing by His Own August and Holy Being, says that none can initiate into bounds of faith unless he, relating all affairs, believes in Allah's judgement, and the judgement of the Eminent Prophet ﷺ.

Briefly, a true believer is he who conscientiously believes the Holy Prophet ﷺ Hadith to be instrumental in all affairs.

The implied order of the verse is that all prophetic order should be accepted manifestly and without constraint. Matters relate to believing in all the Hadith. Neither should one disagree in nor try to repel. After Allah's Book, nothing should be considered equal to Hadith and one should not repudiate them. Neither should one act against nor should have any question in admitting them. The Holy Prophet ﷺ statement is: -

"I swear by that Being in Whose possession is my life, that none of you can be true believers until he submits his wish to the religion I have brought."

Hazrat Umar's Decision

In a 'Weak' (Dhaeef) hadith, the occasion of the revelation of this verse has been described to be the incident of two men who took their dispute to the Prophetic Court and the Holy Prophet judges accordingly. But the man against whom the decision was given said that he was not happy about it. Holy Prophet asked the disgruntled man: "What do you desire? The man suggested he would like to go to Hazrat Abu Bakr. When Siddiq-e-Akbar heard the case, he decided the same way as that of Holy Prophet . Even then the man was not happy and suggested to go to Hazrat Umar. Having arrived at Hazrat Umar's home, the winning party related the whole case from beginning to end. Hazrat Umar enquired of the other man if it was true, and that both of you are coming from Holy Prophet's and Hazrat Abu Bakr's homes. The man replied yes. Then Hazrat Umar radiallahu anhu said, "Well both of you wait here. I'm just coming and I'll decide the case." Next moment he came out with a drawn sword and beheaded the man who sought various opinions, and remarked:

"This is the decision for a man who does not agree with the Holy Prophet's decision."

Frightened and terrified the other man came running to the Holy and said: "My companion has been killed and if I had not run off, I too perhaps would not have been spared." The Holy Prophet said: "I do not know Umar to be like this, that he would shed blood of a believer so daringly." It was on this occasion that this verse was revealed, exonerating Hazrat Umar.

Reward for Conformance and Punishment for Contravention

In short, a real Muslim is one who, in joy as well as sorrow, in friendship as well as enmity, in fact, in every stage of life, may act, keeping the Quran and Hadith and the prophetic pattern in mind. If there is friendship and love for anyone, it should be purely with the intention of winning Allah's and His Apostle's pleasure; and if there is enmity and antagonism against anyone, that too should be for the sake of Allah and His Apostle. Then disputes too should be settled with reference to the Quran and the prophetic pattern. If life was lived like this and in every thing obedience to Allah and the Holy Prophet's auspicious methods were kept in view, then very great rewards have been promised for it in the Quran and the Hadith.

Allah Most High will bestow progress, exaltation and honour in this world. And in the Hereafter, such bounties regarding which the Holy and Truthful Prophet has said:

"Neither have eyes seen them nor ears have heard their description and praise nor their thought has crossed any heart."

Vis-à-vis, very great tortures have been described in the Quran and the Hadith for those who are disobedient to Allah and the Holy Prophet . May Allah Most High, bestowing upon us all the grace to act according to the Quran and the Sunnah, save us from this disgrace! Amen!

The Blessings and Rewards for Conforming To The Sunnah

Allah Most Gracious hath promised great rewards on conformance to the Holy Prophet :

"Say, (O Muhammad to mankind): If ye love Allah, follow me; Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. Allah is Oft-Forgiving Most Merciful. Say (O Muhammad) Obey Allah and the messenger." But if they turn away, lo! Allah loveth not the disbelievers." (III: 31-32).

For a man of faith and with an appreciative heart, what blessings could be better and worthy of pride than the Lord Most High may appoint him as a loved one. But a dormant spirited body unaware of relish and pleasure of love, strange in this corridor, cannot appreciate the bounty and can have no sorrow on its deprivation. Only the enlightened can appreciate value of such love.

Persian couplet:

"This felicity is not achieved by the force of arm as long as the Munificent Lord may not bestow it."

Those who follow the unlettered prophet (VII-157), the divine order is that, "They are successful." Here 'success' has been mentioned as a reward for following the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

In this material world any one achieving a literary degree or a certificate considers to have achieved a milestone in life and guards the precious possession through all his means, even though the achievements of a mortal world are also mortal. Wealth, affluence, and honour are transitory and evanescent, much toil and efforts are put in to achieve prosperity by hook or by crook.

Whereas here we are being asked to follow a being who is the beloved of Allah (Who hath no partner) and the greatest well-wisher of all, in short, of the whole humanity; one who for such keen and sincere well-wishing devoted all his possessions, home, household, family, clan and his own holy self. We are being asked to follow such a beloved person and such a benefactor of humanity and for that a certificate of success in both the worlds is also being awarded.

Divine Punishment in the World and The Hereafter for Avoiding the Sunnah

Similarly, Allah hath shown His wrath for turning away from the Sunnah and disobeying it. Saith Allah Most High: -

"And whatsoever the messenger giveth you, take it. And whatsoever he forbiddeth abstain (from it). And keep your duty to Allah. Lo! Allah is stern in reprisal." (LIX: 7)

"O ye who believe! Obey Allah and His messenger, and turn not away from him when ye hear him (speak). Be not as those who say, We hear, and they hear not. Lo! the worst of beasts in Allah's sight are the deaf, the dumb who have no sense. Had Allah known of any good in them He would have made them hear, but had he made them hear they would have turned away, averse."

Here the believers are ordered to obey Allah and the Holy ﷺ and to give up opposition to them; and they are also ordered not to create similarity with the unbelievers who say that they hear but in fact they do not hear anything.

Opponents of Allah and The Messenger

Allah Most High, mentioning His and the Messenger's opponents in the holy Quran, says: -

"Those who oppose Allah and His messenger will be abased even as those before them were abased; and We have sent down clear tokens, and for disbelievers is a shameful doom." (LVIII: 5)

It is stated in the Tafsir-e-Ibn Kathir that those who oppose Allah and His messenger's commandments and are obstinate regarding the orders of the Shari' ah deserve disgrace, misfortune and damnation. Even as the people before them were ruined and abased for similar actions, they too will be destroyed and abased for the same contumacy. Such clear, open and explicit verses have been given, and tokens revealed that none save those who nurse a sentiment of stubbornness and malice can deny them and he who denies is a disbeliever. Besides, disgrace in this world for such disbelievers there are disparaging tortures in the hereafter also. Here their arrogance prevented them from bowing before their Lord; there they will be put to utmost disgrace and will be thoroughly trampled. The Quran further states: -

"Lo! Those who oppose Allah and His messenger, they will be among the lowest. Allah has decreed: Verily it is I and My Messengers who shall be victorious. Lo! Allah is All-Powerful, All-Mighty." (LVIII: 20)

That is, the people who have turned their backs upon the truth and are away from guidance; those who are Allah's and His messenger's opponents, and are aloof from obeying the commandments of the Shari'ah, they are extremely abject, without honour and wretched. They are remote from the Lord's mercy, screened from Allah's affectionate glances and ruined in the world and the Hereafter. Allah Most High has decided and written in His Book and destined it - the decree and the writing which is ineffaceable and immutable, nor has anyone the power to change it - that Allah and His messenger and His believing slaves will be dominant in the world and the Hereafter as it has been mentioned at another place in the Quran: -

"Lo! We verily do help Our messenger, and those who believe in the life of the world and on the day when the witnesses arise, the day when their excuse availeth not the evil-doers and theirs is the curse, and theirs is the ill abode." (XL: 51-52)

Similarly, what more severe prophetic statement is there regarding disobedience to Allah as it is stated in a hadith reported by Safwan bin Umayyah: -

We were in the Holy Prophet's company when Amr bin Qurrah came. He said: "0 Apostle of Allah! Misery has been ordained for me. I think that my livelihood consists in this only that I play upon the tambourine. Now kindly permit me to sing such songs that may not have any obscene matter." The Holy Prophet said: "I cannot permit you this. Neither have you any honour in my eyes nor do I feel pleased on meeting you. 0 enemy of Allah! You lie. Allah gave you legitimate livelihood but you left it and adopted the illegitimate living. Had I forbidden you earlier, I would have surely punished you now. Get up and be gone from here. Take a vow not to do it anymore and listen: ‘Now that I have warned you, if you do it again, I'll punish you black and blue. To deform your appearance, I'll have you tonsured and have you turned out from your household and I'll permit the young urchins of Madina to plunder all your goods." Hearing this Amr bin Qurrah got up and Allah Alone knows well how much evil must have been in his heart and how much disgrace and shame he must have felt. When he had gone, the Holy Prophet said: "They are the disobedient people; they are those who shun Allah's commandments. If any one of them dies without repentance (taubah), Allah, on the Day of Judgement, will resurrect him in the same condition in which he was in the world - he will be a eunuch. His body will be naked, not having even a small piece of cloth on it so as to hide him from the people's eyes. And whenever he will stand up, he will topple down."

Damnation for Anyone Who Renounces the Sunnah

And the Chief of Both the Worlds ﷺ has himself invoked damnation upon those who oppose Allah and His messenger and his methods. It states in a Hadith reported by Hazrat Ayesha (radiyallahu anha) that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

"I curse and Allah also curses six men, and every prophet is a person whose invocations are accepted by Allah. (Those six men are): (1) One who interpolates in Allah's Book. (2) One who falsifies fate decreed by Allah. (3) One who considers legitimate things forbidden by Allah (4) One who legitimises anyone from amongst my progeny whom Allah has declared forbidden. (5) One who renounces Sunnah (6) Tyrannous ruler who through his tyranny brings low whom Allah has endued with honour and endues with honour whom Allah has created low."

After Allah's and the Holy Prophet's ﷺ damnation, where can one have any shelter in the world and the Hereafter? May Allah keep us under His protection and safety and bestow upon us the grace to act upon His will. Amen.

Many such incidents will be found in the books of Hadith, that damnation apart, even if the Holy Prophet ﷺ condemned anyone, his worldly life and life hereafter were ruined.

Such stories about the disbelievers and the polytheists are many, but it has occurred with some Muslims also, and the Holy Prophet ﷺ became angry with them and if any imprecatory sentence escaped his auspicious tongue, it was immediately answered and materialised forthwith. Then how can the renouncer of the Sunnah who has been cursed by the Holy Prophet ﷺ have any shelter in the world and Hereafter?

Let alone the sin of renouncing the Sunnah, when there is also aversion for the Sunnah in the heart and at the same time such a man makes fun of the followers of the Sunnah, how can The Divine Exultance tolerate such ominous sins? Such people should take care of their faith (iman), in that in this world they themselves and others may consider them Muslims, but, tomorrow, on the Day of Judgement, they will be segregated from the group of Muslims; neither will they get the cup of Kausar nor will they receive intercession.

Deprivation of the Cup of Kausar

Hazrat Sahl bin Sa'd reports that the Holy Prophet said: "I will be the first person to reach the Fountain of Kausar. Whoever passes near me will receive the water of Kausar. He who drinks it once and will never feel thirsty. Some people will come to me there, I shall know them and they me, but meanwhile an impediment will be made between me and them and they will be stopped I'll say "They're my companions". But I'll be told: "You don't know what they did after you." Then I too will say: "Destruction and distance be for that man who changed his behaviour and method after me!"

Hence the holy Companions used to feel great anxiety that while in the world they enjoyed the good fortune of having his comradeship and company, in the next world they might be pushed out from his company due to their misdeeds. As such, once Hazrat Khabbab bin Arat fell ill. Some holy Companions came to inquire about his health and said: "0 Abu Abd Allah! Congratulations that you will meet your brethren (the holy Companions and the Holy Prophet () tomorrow." The narrator of this incident, Hazrat Tariq bin Shahab, says that hearing these words Hazrat Khabbab wept and said: "I was feeling no consternation for a long time but you have (today) revived the memory of a people and you have called them my brethren, but they were such august men that they all earned their recompense and went away, whereas I am afraid lest the recompense of the deeds you mention should be this which was given to us (worldly expansion) after their departure."

If these holy men ever happened to hear from the Holy Prophet a single sentence of displeasure at any decision, they would take it upon themselves and would weep at it. Accordingly, once Hazrat Abd al-Raham ibn Awf went to Hazrat Umm Salmah and said: "Dear Mother, I'm afraid lest my wealth should ruin me; I'm very affluent among the Quraishites." She said: "0 my son! Spend your wealth for I have, heard it from the Holy Prophet that he used to say: "Amongst my Companions there would be some who would not be able to see me after I go away leaving them behind." Then Hazrat Abd al-Rahman bin Awf went from there and met Hazrat Umar and narrated to him what Hazrat Umm Salmah had said.

Hearing this Hazrat Umar came to Hazrat Umm Salmah and asked her: "By Allah! Am I too amongst those people who would not have the good fortune to see him again"? She said: "No, 0 Umar! But besides you, I don't exempt anyone else."

This is a long narrative. We had only to state here that what severe comminations have been reported in the Quran and the Hadith for opposing the Holy Prophet and his orders and methods. Hearing these comminations the Companions used to cry and tremble as to what would be their condition on the Day of Judgment. Their whole life used to be an exemplary specimen of the Holy Prophet's holy life and yet they always used to feel concerned lest they might commit some lapse, because his statements in this regard are absolute.

No Paradise for the Denier

The Holy Prophet said: "My entire ummah will go to Paradise save one who denies." The Companions inquired: "0 Apostle of Allah! Who's the person who denies you"? He replied: "He who obeyed me entered Paradise, and he who disobeyed me and did not believe in me denied." (Mishkat)

In this Hadith the Holy Prophet states that whosoever does not act upon his holy statements is a denier and such a denier will not enter Paradise along with his ummah; for had he had perfect faith and had made him (the Prophet) his beloved sincerely, he would have loved each one of his statements and actions, and he would have acted according to them, but when he did not act upon the sunnahs, it becomes clear that he was a repudiator.

Though his repudiation is not like that of the disbelievers and the polytheists, he does share, to some extent, this quality with them and so he will be kept first in Hell along with his comrades; since he had imitated them and co-operated with them in the world, he will have to put up with them. The only difference is that while the infidels and the polytheists will have to live there (in Hell) forever, he will not live there always; the punishment of Hell will be proposed for him in proportion to the extent and time he had copied them and forsaken his Prophet's methods.

O Lord of the Universe! Bestow upon this ummah the grace to obey its true Prophet and save it from hell and enter it into Paradise along with the very first group of Your Beloved Prophet. Amen!

No Connection With Us - If You Shun Sunnah

Similarly, the Holy Prophet excludes from his fold one who shuns Sunnah. As such, he has said: "He who shuns my sunnah - turns his face from them - he has had no connection with me."

When His Holiness himself turns out any one from his group, however much we may assert ourselves to be within the fold of Islam and among the Umma-e Muhammadiyyah, we cannot enter this group. After the Holy Prophet's ruling and fatwa the learned ulema (divines) may or may not issue this fatwa for any one. But the categorical thing is that such a man does not remain a Muslim, rather he is not a Muslim. Then, in the world, he may or may not believe it but he will come to know tomorrow, on the Day of Judgement, at the Fountain of Kausar, when he will be turned away from there; and the Holy Prophet will himself say: "Destruction and remoteness be for one who changed his way (of life) after me!"

Hence one should always be very fearful as regards disobedience to Allah and His Prophet and should keep following his auspicious sunnahs and methods with all the force at one's command. But it should always be borne in mind that man's baser self (nafs) and Satan will always keep telling him: "Well, you are very weak. Where have you the strength to follow it (sunnah)?" Hence one should try to save oneself from the Satan's guile and deceit, otherwise the consequence will be very bad.

The Result of Arrogance

Here I narrate an incident from the prophetic time so that Muslims may take a warning from it and save themselves, because one has often to face the same situation that is mentioned herein. The incident reported by Harrat Salmah bin Akwa' is that a man was eating with his left hand in the Holy Prophet's ﷺ presence. The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked him to eat with his right hand but he said that he did not have the strength to do so. At this the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: "May you not have the strength!" One can understand that it was nothing but arrogance that had prevented him from eating with his right hand. But then the result of this curse was that he could never lift his right hand up to his mouth again! That person could certainly eat with his right hand but it was merely due to his arrogance that he said that he could not eat with it and hence Allah Almighty made it such that he could never lift it again.

Once it so happened that I myself told a man: "You partake your food on the table but the Sunnah practice is to sit on the floor for dining." He promptly replied: "I cannot sit down; it is difficult for me to sit down." Although not more than three or four years had passed since he had come over (to the U.K.), the pride and arrogance of having made a few pennies prevented him from acting on this sunnah; there was no other reason but this.

If a man commits a sin inadvertently or misses a sunnah, but considers himself before Allah and His Apostle a sinner and a guilty person, it is strongly hoped that Allah Almighty will pardon him. But to act against the Holy Prophet's ﷺ methods and then to explain away one's actions according to one's own whims and wishes and make lame excuses. And to not to act upon the prophetic Sunnah through arrogance, on the contrary to think lightly of them, not only draws Allah's punishment in the Hereafter, but in this world also very soon. The first target of the divine scourge which is struck first is his arrogance and riches, power, beauty etc. the causes of arrogance which prevented him from acting upon the Sunnah and the Shari'ah.

The Prophetic Order Should Be Carried Out Promptly

"O you who believe! Obey Allah and the messenger when he calleth you to that which will give you life."
(VIII: 24).

It means that whenever the Holy Prophet ﷺ calls the believers for their improvement and expediency, they should very promptly carry out his orders. Hazrat Abu Sa'eed bin al-'Ala reports, "I was saying the prayer when the Holy Prophet ﷺ happened to pass by me. He called me but due to prayer I could not go to him promptly. After having completed the prayer when I presented myself before him, he said: "Why did you not come quickly? Has not Allah said that when Allah and the Apostle call you for your own good you should present yourselves immediately?" In short, the order here is for quick execution of an order. Allah Most High says in the Quran: -

"O you who believe! When you meet an army, hold firm and think of Allah much, that you may be successful. And obey Allah and His messenger, and dispute not one with another lest you lose courage and your strength departs from you; but be steadfast! Lo! Allah is with the steadfast." (VIII: 45-46),

Allamah Ibn Kathir writes, 'In these noble verses Allah Most High orders Muslims to be steadfast in the battlefield against the enemy and to be patient and enduring. Do not show timidity. Remember Allah much; don't ever forget Him. Complain to Him only, invoke Him only and trust and rely upon Him only, and seek help from Him only. This is the secret of success. So, at that time also, don't be remiss in obeying Allah and His Apostle. Carry out what they say and stop from doing what they forbid. Don't spread mutual dissent and quarrels, otherwise timidity will step in and you will be put to disgrace. You will lose credit and strength and bravery will depart from you. Good luck and progress will cease. Beware that you don't give up the skirt of patience; be certain that Allah Most High sides with the steadfast.

The Holy Companions' Matchless Compliance And Allah's Reward

The holy Companions came out so successful in complying with these orders that their example, let alone the successors, is not found even amongst the predecessors. It is the same intrepidity, the same obedience to the Prophet and the same patience and perseverance wherefore they always remained enriched with divine succour and with in a short time, in spite of less number (strength) and shortage of provisions they conquered the east and the west. Not only did they become the masters of the conquered countries but also conquered the peoples' hearts and acquainted them with Allah. They subjugated the Romans, the Persians, the Turks, the Seqalians, the Berbers, the Negroes, in short, all the whites and blacks of the world; and elevated Allah's order, spread the true religion and established Islamic states in all the corners of the world. May Allah be pleased with them and further more pleased. Just think that within the brief span of 30 years they changed the map of the world and turned the page of history. May Allah resurrect us too in their group! Ameen!

The Prophet's ﷺ Liability Is To Convey The Message Only

The divine order for those who turn their face from the prophetic order is: -

"Say: Obey Allah and obey the messenger. But if you turn away, he (Messenger muhammad ﷺ is only responsible for that wherewith he has been charged, and for you (to do) only that wherewith you have been charged. If you obey him, you will be on the right guidancet. But the messenger has no other charge than to convey (the message) plainly." (XXIV:54)

Allamah Ibn Kathir says, 'Conform to Allah and His messenger,' i.e. the Quran and the Hadith. If you turn away from them and eschew them, the curse of this sin will not be upon (My) prophet. He has been charged only to convey the message, to deliver the deposit. And upon you is that with which you have been charged with, i.e. to accept it and act upon it, etc. And guidance consists only in obeying the Apostle.

Divine Rewards on Obedience

Thereafter, promising vicegerency on earth for the obedient ones and followers of the Holy Prophet , the divine statement is:

"Allah hath promised such of you who believe and do good works that He will surely make them to succeed (the present rulers) in the earth even as He caused those who were before them to succeed (others) and that He will surely establish for them their religion which He hath approved for them, and will give them in exchange safety after their fear. They serve Me. They ascribe no-thing as partner unto Me. Those who disbelieve henceforth, they are the miscreants." (XXIV: 55).

Under this verse Allamah Ibn Kathir has written in detail on Allah's fulfilment of this promise; a part of it is reproduced here. He has stated that Allah is promising the Holy Prophet that He will make his ummah the owner of this earth and will make it the ruler of the peoples. Countries will be populated with them and Allah's slaves will be pleased with them. Today they are afraid of others; tomorrow they will have peace and safety and composure. The government and the state will be theirs. These promises during the period of their poverty were also a test for the Companions.

Allah ta'ala's Promise was fulfilled During the Prophet's Era and The Companions' Period

Praise be to Allah that Mecca, Khyber, the Arabian Peninsula and Yemen were conquered during the Holy Prophet's lifetime. The magi of Hajar accepted subjugation by paying the jizyah (recompense). The same happened with some parts of Syria also. The emperor of Rome, Heraclius, and the king of Egypt sent presents. The King of Alexanderia, Maquqis, and the ruler of Oman also did the same thing and thus expressed their obedience. The king of Ethiopia, Ismaha, embraced Islam and his successors too sent presents to the Prophet's Court.

Thereafter, when Allah Most High called back His beloved prophet to His own presence, Siddiq-e-Akbar took charge of the caliphate. He strengthened the state of the Arabian Peninsula and made it independent. At the same time he sent a strong army under Saifullah Khalid bin Waleed's command to Fars (Persia) where it started a series of conquests. He uprooted the stalwart trees of infidelity and planted instead the plants of Islam everywhere. He dispatched the temerarious devotees of Islam under Hazrat Abu Obaidah bin al-Jarrah and other noble Companions to

different monarchical countries. They pulled down the signs of the Cross there and raised the flag of Islam. An army of the crusaders of Islam was sent to Egypt under Hazrat Amr bin al-Aas's command. After the capture of Egypt, Damascus, Harran, etc. Siddiq-e Akbar also passed away.

Then, through divine inspiration, the reins of the Islamic power were given into the hands of a great stalwart like Hazrat Umar The truth is that there had never passed under the sky a period of such holy successors after any prophet. It is simply an exercise in futility to search for an example in the world of Hazrat Umar's inherent strength, virtuous character, perfect justness and fear of Allah. The whole country of Syria, the entire Egypt and the greater part of Persia (Iran) was conquered during his caliphate regime. The vast empire of Kisra broke up into pieces. Kisra himself could not find a place to hide therein; with utter helplessness and indignity he kept running from place to place. Caesar was also captured. His very name was obliterated. He had to give up the state of Syria and had to take shelter in Constantinople. The wealth and treasures of these empires, accumulated and amassed over the centuries, these slaves of Allah spent upon the pious and poor slaves of Allah and thus those promises Allah had made verbally with the Prophet were fulfilled.

Then comes the period of Hazrat Usman's caliphate and religion spreads to the far reaches of the east and the west. The Islamic army, on the one hand, reaches the eastern horizon and, on the other, goes to the extreme west and takes the rest. The belief of Divine Unity too accompanies the crusaders of Islam; while their bright swords conquer countries, this true belief conquers the hearts of those people who, disgusted with polytheism, were in search of the true doctrine. Andalusia (Spain), Cyprus, Qairwan, even lands up to China, were conquered during Hazrat Usman's time. A treacherous, greedy Persian brought Kisra (Yezdegird III) to his death. Fire-temples where fire had blazed for centuries non-stop cooled down and instead the sound of Allahu Akbar (Azaan-prayer-call) began to rise from every knoll and mound. On the other side, Ctesiphon (Mada'in), Khurasan and Ahwaz, all were captured. A Great War was fought with the Turks and their king, Khaqan, was put to disgrace. The warriors of Islam collected tributes from every nook and corner of the east and the west and sent it to the caliphate court. After Hazrat Usman's martyrdom begins Hazrat Ali's caliphate.

The Extent of the Islamic Sultanate

And thereafter the Islamic states continued to change one after another and the Peerless Lord bestowed victories upon the Muslims, as Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi (may his shadow never grow less!) said in one lecture: "Allah's slaves had toiled for some days. What result's appeared from the fields of Badr and Uhad? The result was that among their descendants was born a man who is known as Harun Rasheed. He is a very famous caliph. I shall tell you an example about his sultanate. Once he was sitting in Baghdad when a cloud passed over his head. He raised his head to see where the cloud was going. Then he said: "Go towards east or towards west; go wherever you like and rain down wherever you like. The outcome of your raining, the fruit of your labour, i.e., the crop, the grain, the harvest will come to me only (lit. to my feet only). Rain down wherever you like but its tribute will come to me only. "These are indeed great words which indicate how Allah Most High bestowed vast states upon the Muslims for their obedience to Allah and the Apostle. As long as the fervour for carrying out Allah's and His Apostle's orders continued, on account of which Allah fulfils His promises, the Muslims' pomp and grandeur also continued.

Decrease In Rewards In Proportion To Decline In Obedience & Fidelity

Then as the illuminating light that had been transmitted from the Holy Prophet's ﷺ bosom to the holy Companions chests had spread it to all parts and nooks and corners of the world, within a few years, it began to diminish in the Muslims' chests and its light went on diminishing. Allah Most High, finding their capability for vicegerency on earth decreasing, withdrew this great bounty from them.

In the present period when our lives and our ways of life are Completely different from that of Holy Prophet's ﷺ ways. Instead of following the holy ways we are miles away. Even after our aversion, sins, misdeeds, and mistakes Allah most high has bestowed his grace upon us just for following the commonest Sunnah. Today vast parts of land are under Muslim domain and we are abundantly and plentifully provided. Circumstances and resources are in every way favourable. Perhaps these days there will not be any Muslim meagre enough to starve. Everyone is earning a living with ease. We are in great comfort. We may steer our lives any way we like. Our diligence and wisdom should be to mould our lives in a way as to achieve the intended goal with ease. Should we start deviating, disputing and considering the atmosphere to be unfavourable, our over indulged, precious lifetime will soon be over. The Shadow of Death will cut off our last chance of repentance and no one would

ever come to know about the agony of death we would be passing through in the midst of the sea; and even if one discovered it, help would hardly reach us and we would get drowned in the mighty sea, saying with a hundred regrets: -

"If only Thou wouldst give us respite yet a while" (IV: 77)

A Perfect Specimen before Us

For us it is very easy to act upon Islam, for we have before us Allah's instruction and the Holy Prophet's ﷺ good example and the noble Companions' auspicious lives. Living according to the above examples indeed is very easy for us, and today we can read about the fulfilment of the Lord Most High's promise and are witnessing its old remains even after the passage of fourteen hundred years. The whole Islamic world with its garden and spring and its decoration and splendour is before our eyes. Even by having a look at it we can be lured to conform to the Sunnah, for when Allah Most High had fulfilled the promise He had made with those persons who were obedient to the Prophet ﷺ Allah Alone knows what must have truly been its splendour then.

Promises Of Rewards and Test of Faith

But when these promises were made with the holy Companions, if it was on the one hand an occasion for great joy and pleasure of divine rewards, it was, on the other hand, also a severe and prodigious test of their faith. As such, the Companions' faith and certitude were put to a very ponderous test at the time of the Battle of the Ditch. It says in a Hadith that while the ditch was being dug a very big hard rock appeared on which the pickaxe would have no effect. The Companions reported this matter to the Holy Prophet ﷺ He looked at the rock, took up the pickaxe and, saying Bismillah, struck it. At the very first stroke one-third of the rock was broken. At that time the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: "Allah is greatest! I've been given the keys of the country of Syria; I've seen its red palaces'.'

Then he struck a second time and another third of the rock was shattered to pieces. Again he said: "Allah is Greatest! I've been given the keys of the country of Persia and just now I am seeing the white palace of Ctesiphon'.'

Then he gave the third stroke and the whole rock broke and he said: "I've been awarded the keys of the country of Yemen. By Allah! From here I'm seeing the gates of the city of San'a'.'

What a great test it was of the holy Companions' faith and certitude! What a tremendous trial it was for them that the Holy Prophet was saying all this at a time when enemies of Allah had besieged the illuminated Madina from all the four sides and the said ditch' was being dug as a means of defence and safety. There was starvation all round in the beleaguered Muslim army. Pangs of hunger would not let the waist remain straight and so to keep it straight stones were being tied upon the stomach, and they had to dig the ditch in the severe winter from the early morning, in a state of thirst and hunger. As such the Holy Prophet said: "OAllah! Undoubtedly the real life is the afterlife. So pardon all the Emigrants (Muhajirin) and the Helpers (Ansar)'.'

In response the holy Companions said: "We have vowed allegiance to the Holy Prophet for jihad - as long as we are alive." The Holy Prophet saw that the Companions were lifting and throwing the earth while singing the above-mentioned couplet. So he said: "O Allah! The real good is the good of the Hereafter. So open the doors of prosperity (barakat) for the Helpers and the Emigrants."

Similarly, it is an era of poverty and destitution; indigence and starvation reign supreme; murder and plunder are the order of the day. Caravans after caravans and even big groups of people are looted. If anyone embarks on a journey, neither his goods are safe, nor his life, nor his honour. Adi bin Hatim (Allah be pleased with him!) reports that in his presence comes a man to the Holy Prophet and complains about starvation and indigence. Another man comes and complains regarding the insecurity of the roads. Under such unfavourable circumstances, the Holy Prophet in response to both these men, says: "O 'Adi! If you journey alone from Hira and will compass (Tawaf): (Compassing the sacred territory or going round the Kaba) and there shall be no fear on your way except Allah's fear'.' Under such straitened circumstances he is giving such glad tidings of peace and security about a country where cases of assassination,plunder and robbery occur not once or twice but as a daily routine; a country where the bandits whereof are notorious and have desolated habitations and spread terror throughout the country. In reply to the second man he says: ‘If your life happens to be long, you'll open Kisra's treasures'.”

Hazrat 'Adi bin Hatim says that with astonishment he asked: "Is it Kisra bin Hormuz"? He said "Yes, Kisra bin Hormuz." Then he said: "If you live long you'll see that a man will wander with a handful of gold and silver and no one will accept it."

Hazrat 'Adi reports: I have myself seen such an old woman performing the Hajj; she had come alone from Kufa for Hajj and (in the way) she had no fear of anyone but Allah. And I was myself participating in capturing Kisra's treasures; and the third prediction was also fulfilled during Hazrat Umar bin Abd al-Aziz’s time: that the payer of zakat would not find a beggar to accept it and therefore used to return home with his money."

The Holy Prophet's ﷺ giving such happy tidings under straitened circumstances and on occasions of complaints against severity, though of no importance to him, were indeed, by reason of their humanness, very great and important for the Holy Companions, vis-à-vis such miserable conditions; and thus their faith was also tested, that disgusted by the prevailing conditions and confounded by austerities, whether they held the Holy Prophet's ﷺ promises in suspicion or not.

A Tremendous Trial

The Lord Most High wanted to perfect the religion during the Holy Prophet's ﷺ lifetime itself. Hence every thing and every quality of the Companions was put into the furnace of trial and test. Accordingly, in the incipient period of Islam they were involved in various kinds of afflictions and woes to see if they held their lives dearer than Allah's and His Prophet's ﷺ orders. Then they were separated from their wives and children and kith and kin to see if they loved their families and clans and the world and worldly goods more than Allah and the Apostle. At last they were bereft of all such things. But the holy Companions succeeded with flying colours in all such tests: in compliance with Allah's and the Apostle's orders they not only agreed verbally to leave their goods and clans, wives and children, but also demonstrated it by their action. The test however did not cease there. Rather, they were told: "Consider our enemies as your enemies also, and if they fight against our religion and Our Prophet, you must fight against them also." The holy Companions demonstrated the execution of this order also in the Battle of Badr. Some of them killed their own sons, and some their brothers and some their relatives. In short, all of them jumped into the fray against their own kith and kin.

To day it is very easy for us to read about these events and circumstances: but what an awful trial it must have been for the holy Companions. To consider and treat persons, reared and nurtured by themselves, and those with whom they have passed their lives, life-long friends with whom they had held banquets and made merry, as their worst enemies! Not only this, but they had also proved it by killing such nearest and dearest

in the battlefield as and when the occasion arose. One can only admire the holy Companions love for Allah, His Apostle and the religion brought by him. In following the religion they had forgotten all and sacrificed all.

A Trial Journey

Similarly, at the time of treaty or agreement of Hudaybiah the holy Companions were put to a very severe test. A party of 1400 of them, suffering all sorts of troubles and inconvenience of the journey reached Hudaybiah from Madina but the implacable Meccans stopped them there and told them: "You cannot perform the umrah this year.” They had to return regretfully from here bearing the same hardships of journey. On unilateral conditions apparently an agreement was made as under: -

(1) The Muslims should return this year.
(2) They may come next year, stay three days and then return.
(3) They must not come armed. They may bring their swords but in sheaths and the sheaths should be in bags.
(4) They must not take along with them any Muslims who have been residing in Mecca from the very beginning and should not prevent any Muslim from living in Mecca.
(5) Should any one of the infidels go to Madina from Mecca, he should be returned but should any Muslim come to Mecca, he would not be returned.
(6) The Arabian tribes shall have the option to make pacts with either of the parties.

The Holy Prophet's signing this treaty under divine inspiration, despite commanding so much power was only a test of the holy Companions' sentiment of faith. Otherwise he had with him such a mighty army of well-trained headstrong soldiers that only 313 of them, clashing with a well-armed 1000-strong army of the enemy, had cut it to pieces; and most of them had been individually given the chance of seasoning their military experience by the Quraishites themselves. Thus, as regards numbers, weapons, strength and force, the Muslims scale was supreme in every way. Besides this, on this occasion, many tricks had been played from the infidel's side that the entire prophetic army was already in a state of provocation. To inflame them further there was neither any need of poetry nor rajaz (martial songs), neither of any oration nor material panegyrics, because this 1400- strong army had not come to fight but to visit the One Lord's House from where they had been driven away. It was a visit they were anxiously eager for. They had come to pass a few days on the sacred and beloved soil that was their and their ancestors, native land upon which they had been born and grown up.

Hudaybiah is a plain, a short day's march to the north of Mecca. Six years had passed since the Holy Prophet had left his beloved city and it had been in the hands of the Pagan autocracy. By Arab custom every Arab was entitled to visit the Sacred Enclosure (Kaabah). In. 6 A.H therefore the Holy Prophet decided to perform 'Umrah' or lesser pilgrimage accompanied with his followers.

A Large following joined him, to the number fourteen to fifteen hundred. Pagan autocracy at Mecca took alarm, and in breach of all Arab tradition and usage, prepared to prevent the peaceful party from performing the rites of pilgrimage. They marched out to fight the holy party. The Prophet encamped at Hudaybiah, where negotiations took place. On the one hand the Prophet was unwilling to give the Quraish any pretended excuse for violence in the Sacred Territory; on the other hand, the Quraish had learnt, by six years bitter experience, that their power was crumbling on all sides, and Islam was growing with its moral and spiritual forces. The enthusiasm with which the Covenant of Fealty was entered into under a tree in Hudaybiah by the great multitude united in devotion to their great leader, was the evidence of great power which he commanded even in worldly sense if the Quraish had chosen to try conclusions with him.

A Peace Treaty was therefore concluded. known as the, 'Treaty of Hudaybiah'.

The Prophet and his holy Companions' Beloved Land

The Holy Prophet himself had so much love for this land that when he was migrating to Madina, he paid a farewell visit to the House of Allah and said: "Oh dear valley of Mecca! You are dearer to me than the whole world. Had your inhabitants not compelled me to leave, I would never have left you."

Similarly, prior to migration, Madina was known as Yathrib and its climate was very harmful, which, later on, due to the Holy Prophet's invocation vacated Madina forever in the form of an incubus and an ugly, dishevelled woman. Many Companions suffered ill health in Madina. Hazrat Bilal, suffering from high fever and the pang of separation, was weeping and reciting the following couplets: - "Ah! Could that day come when I might pass a night in the valley of Mecca, amidst Izkhir (the bog-rush) and Jalil (Large palm trees laden with fruits)? And would that day too come that I might encamp at the streams of Mujannah and Sham (Black moles), and Tafil (pond of muddy water) be visible to me?"

Besides this, many Companions' wives and children were still in Mecca, for the Companions had migrated to Madina. So when these warriors were prevented from visiting the House of Allah and meeting their nearest and dearest ones and their wives and children, in whose separation they were burning for years, one can imagine what must have been their reaction. Moreover, all the conditions of the treaty were against the Muslims as the treaty was being made under restraint. But great as they were these auspicious Companions for the Last Prophet, the Chief and the Pride of the Two Worlds, for the sake of Allah and the Apostle they tolerated all these things!

A Strange Happening

Calling this treaty to be a test in his book, Sirat al-Nabi, Maulana Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi writes that the Companions' tolerating these conditions of the treaty was a very delicate test of their obedience. On the one hand, it openly amounts to an insult to Islam. Hazrat Abu Jandal, wearing fetters, is asking the warriors of Islam to help him while, in the very face of these 1400 warriors, an infidel is slapping Abu Jandal on the face. Witnessing this spectacle all the Muslims are shedding tears that "Allah hath bestowed upon us and on Islam so much honour and yet so much oppression is being inflicted on a brother of ours"! And Abu Jandal too says complainingly: "O Muslims! Will I be entrusted to the infidels again though I have come here as a Muslim? Can't you see what is happening to me"? The narrator reports that severe tyrannies were inflicted on him for merely calling Allah to be the One Lord, otherwise he had no other offence. The purpose of this punishment was only: the way he believed Allah to be the Lord. Hazrat Abu Jandal's statement itself has been reported that calling out Muslims loudly he was saying: "Will I be handed over to the pagans again that they may torture me for my religion of Islam?" Feelings were running high, at a slight hint the swords were ready to be lifted for clinching decision. The agreement is being written but signatures have not been set yet on the pact, when Abu Jandal was brought to this assembly before Suhayl bin Amr (who had the authority to sign this pact on behalf of the Meccans). The Holy Prophet ﷺ looked at Abu Jandal and said: O Abu Jandal! Observe patience and hope for recompense. Allah Most High is undoubtedly going to create an opening and a way for you and your companions. A pact has been made between these people and ourselves and we cannot contravene it."

In short, Hazrat Abu Jandal had to go back in fetters. What a severe and stern test it was the companions as well as Abu Jandal that years had passed over his enduring and tolerating such tyrannies and yet there was none to rescue him! Persian Couplet: -

"0 Lord! It is a great calamity that there is no shelter on this vast earth save yourself!"

Stealthily escaping from the prison in fetters and tottering into the Prophetic Court amidst the warriors of Islam, in the hope that he would be set free. What must have been his feelings on hearing mere words of consolation and apology?

The Noble Companions Were Mountains Of Patience and Endurance:

They used to face the hardship and afflictions but the faith and certitude in their heart were firm like a fixed mountain which could not be shaken a whit. Perhaps the endurance of hundreds, indeed thousands and millions of the Muslims today cannot match the power of faith of Abu Jandal alone... that even in such a parlous trial he staunchly stuck to his Islam and did not show any weakness or flinched from his course. May Allah be pleased with him and more pleased. Instead of extinguishing the smouldering fire in the restless hearts of such afflicted lovers, it was further inflamed: the real Beloved, just to test them, called them up to His door and then returned them. He showed a glimpse of Himself in a dream but did not give its interpretation soon. What must have been the lover's condition is beyond words; there is no power in any pen to describe it, no strength in any tongue to narrate it. Till now they were, to some extent, expecting that perhaps the order might be changed and the obstructers would be punished for their mischief. But when the Holy Prophet ﷺ asked them to sacrifice the animals there and get tonsured, the sad and sorrow-stricken and heart broken Companions sat down motionlessly and a howling wilderness ensued. Although they were so obedient that when in the mosque the Holy Prophet ﷺ asked them to sit down and his melodious voice reached the ears of a Companion at the gate of the mosque, he immediately sat down there (in the midst of shoes); but today, despite hearing the instruction directly, no one moved. They were heavyhearted, as if a mountain of sorrow was upon their hearts; for not being able to meet the Beloved even after reaching His Door. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ repeated this sentence thrice and found the 1400 Companions faint and half-dead, he thought perhaps they expected change in this order; so, in order to correct this misunderstanding, he himself first offered the sacrifice and got himself tonsured. They all were convinced and all of them made the sacrifices, and after tonsuring put on their clothes, and returned to Madina after the treaty.

Another Test after Turning Them Away From the Door

It seems that this journey was a touchstone, entirely a test from end to end. As such, when *Surah-Al-Fath* was revealed on the return-journey, saying:

"Verily! We have given thee (O Muhammad) a manifest victory,"

The hearts were heavy with the shock of being driven away from the door and under a mountain of woe eyes were shedding tears. And in this state the Companions received the divine order not to consider it a setback, a discomfiture, but to call it a victory. They were asked not to be woeful by considering it a defeat but to express joy since Allah called it a victory.

Apparently it has been called a victory quite contrary to circumstances, events and observation. Was it a test? If not what was it? Had it not been a test of Iman and endurance but the consolation was meant by these noble verses, than at least there should have been some prophecy of glories to come. However it seemed to be a test. Test of heart and tongue. Call it a Victory and believe it to be from deep down. And with these holy beings it cannot be anything else but obedience. Hypocrisy was not their way. That is in fact our way of life today. Persian couplet:

On the tongue is '*Ya Samad*' (Allah, the Eternally Besought of all) and in the heart is '*Ya Sanam*' (0 beloved idol). You are an infidel in the heart. Why do you then show yourself to be a Muslim?

At that time there was not the slightest scope for suspecting Allah's and the Holy Prophet's ﷺ orders, as otherwise divine revelation (wahy) would have revealed and exposed the reality.

The most aggrieved man on this occasion was Hazrat Umar ^. Since it was he who had conversed with the Holy Prophet ﷺ on this matter. The Prophet called him particularly to recite this surah to him as he was most provoked and intoxicated with this sentiment, just to observe whether he would believe it as a victory or not or would express any doubt about it.

In short, it appears from looking into all the events and particulars of this journey that the real purpose of this journey was just to test the Companions' faith, that they should always be ready to sacrifice their sentiment and eagerness, love and liking and every thing else for Allah's and the Holy Prophet's ﷺ.

Mary The Copt's Mature Certitude

When the Holy Prophet's ﷺ son, Ibrahim, died and the child's mother, Mary the Copt (Hazrat Maria Qibtiah) began to weep. He, consoling her, said: "Our dear son Ibrahim is playing in the laps of the houris of Paradise. If you wish then I may invoke Allah to remove the veils so that you may see him playing in Paradise."

And it was because of the same certainty that Hazrat Maria said: “This is sufficient. I fully believe your statement. I don't want to see now lest my eye might err and see wrongly, but your statement cannot be wrong.”

Thus, on this occasion of Hudaybiah their sentiment of faith and certitude was put to test and they acquitted themselves well in it. Besides this there have been reported many other occasions. The holy Companions were involved into many differing kinds of afflictions and trials, but even the most delicate test could not budge them an inch from their stand, and the severest earthquake and storm could not produce the slightest stagger in their feet.

Such were the holy Companions who had subjected themselves to the Shari'ah. If they must live, it would be in conformance with the Holy Prophet ﷺ and if they must die, that too would be in accordance with it and in all circumstances they would follow his methods only. For them the Holy Prophet's ﷺ good example was the same as water is for fish which cannot remain alive without it. These august men too could not remain alive without following his holy methods.

His Good Example

"Verily in the messenger of Allah ye have a good example for him who looketh unto Allah and the Last Day, and remembereth Allah much." (XXXIII: 21)

Hazrat Umar Farouq's statement is that, "Allah Most High commissioned the Holy Prophet as the apostle; we confirmed in him and conformed to him. He demonstrated action on everything which Allah had ordered him."

Regarding this verse Allamah Ibn Kathir says that this verse is a great proof of the fact that all the sayings, actions and conditions of the Holy Prophet are worthy of following and conformance. The example of patience and endurance and matchless bravery, including his zest and preparation for the way of Allah and his complete faith and certainty in the Lord, even under the greatest severity, all these things are such that the Muslims should cultivate as the most conspicuous part of their lives and make their beloved Prophet their best exemplar, and characterise themselves with these qualities.

Hence Allah Most High says in the holy Quran about those men who were showing restlessness, confusion and distraction: "As to why you did not conform to My Prophet although he was present amongst you and his example was also before you. There was not only a compilation of patience and perseverance for you but there was also the mountain of patience and endurance and perseverance and deliberation present before your eyes. When you believe in Allah and the Last Day, there was no reason why you would not make your Prophet a specimen and example for yourselves."

In short, Allah Most High sent the Holy Prophet as an example for this ummah. Islam is meant for all the human beings who are to be born till the Last Day and it will lead the ummah on every front, for Allah has openly declared: -

"This day I have perfected your religion for you and completed My favour unto you, and have chosen for you as religion Al-Islam." (V: 3)

Islam is not the name of the collection of a few prayers; it is rather a guide in every age for every walk of life, be it politics or economics. To believe in Islamic orders and acknowledge the divine commandments in all affairs is sheer exaction upon oneself and Islam. And to assert that Islam should not be allowed to interfere with state affairs amount to a very great calumny against Allah, Allah's religion and Allah's Book; for it instils that which Allah forbids, the proclamation of perfect guidance, is a mere lie.

So, instead of basing false opinions, one should admit one's own lack of intelligence and one's own little knowledge and ignorance. For the guidance of everything are present in Islam, but our own intelligence and understanding and knowledge do not have a grasp of it.

The Holy Prophet's Company In Paradise

There is promise of a very great reward on obeying Allah and His Apostle, Allah Most High says: -

"And whoso obey Allah and the messenger, then they will be in the company of those on whom Allah has bestowed His Grace, of the Prophets, the Siddiqun, the martyrs, the righteous. And how excellent these companions are!" (IV: 69)

What great rewards Allah Most High promises for obeying and His Apostle which is already a man's duty by reason of his being human. The real values of such great promises will be realised only after death, but if one ponders even now over the troubles of the Plain of Resurrection and the wretched end of the repudiators of Allah and His Apostle, each and every breath of life can pass in conformance to Allah and His Apostle and, thereafter, if one is absolved only from those troubles, afflictions, torture and punishment which have been promised for those disobedient to Allah and His Apostle, only then it is a great success - such a great success that it is impossible to imagine it while living in this world.

May I be sacrificed on Allah's and His Apostle's unlimited affections on mankind, that the human beings may do something for their own advantage and yet may get rewards - and the reward too fixed for them is so great that they would enjoy the Holy Prophet's company in heaven.

Description of Heaven

The idea and estimate of Heaven, and at that the Paradise which will be given to the Chief of the Prophets, the Pride of the Two Worlds can be had from this that the lowest man amongst the occupants of Paradise will get a garden ten times bigger than that of this world. Entering Paradise he will glance right and left and seeing the gardens will ask: "For whom are these"? He will be told that they are for him. When he will proceed further, a red ruby or a green emerald will be brought before him in which there will be seventy houses, each having seventy rooms and each room having seventy doors. He will be told: "Go on reciting and climbing," until he reaches his masnad (throne) on which he will sit and recline. Then his houris will come to him. Their condition will be such that one of them will come and sit down before him on the throne. She will be wearing seventy suits of clothes, each of a different colour, and she will be so beautiful that in spite of those clothes her flesh and blood and bones, even bone-marrow, will be visible. This lowly occupant of Paradise will ask her: "Who are you"? She will say: "I am the houri who had been preserved for you till now. Then he will continue making amorous glances at her for forty years and will not withdraw his eves from her.

Hazrat Abu Huraira reports: "We said: O Apostle of Allah! Describe to us how will be the construction of Paradise?" He said: "There will be bricks of gold and silver and the mortar will be of musk and its gravel will be of garnet and pearls and its dust of saffron."

Hazrat Abu Huraira reports that there is a tree in Paradise, the trunk of which is of gold and its branches are of emerald and pearl. When the wind blows such a melodious sound is produced that the hearers have not heard a more melodious sound. Similarly, the Holy Prophet described the trees, canals, fruits, walls, doors, in brief, everything of the Paradise - things which neither any eye has seen nor any ear has heard about nor the thought thereof has passed any mind.

When such wonderful bounties are there for an ordinary occupant of Paradise, what must be there for the near ones, the favourites and the Chief of the Prophets Wrongdoers like us, through slave-hood to the Holy Prophet may receive the greatest bounty of his companionship and at that, with such bounties what can be a greater reward than this? May Allah Most High bestow upon us the ability to appreciate these bounties and create room in our hearts for his holiness's auspicious methods! Amen!

A hundred pities that action on these methods, in spite of such great promises, even the greatness of these methods has today departed from the Muslims' hearts! A hundred pities that action on these methods, in spite of such great promises, even the greatness of these methods has today departed from the Muslims' hearts!

Reward For Love of the Sunnah

It has been stated in a Hadith reported by Hazrat Anas that the Holy Prophet told him: "Son! If you are capable of having no malice in your heart for anyone, then adopt this method because it is my practice (Sunnah). One who likes my ways, loves me and he is my companion in heaven."

We should ponder over our condition as to how far away we have drifted that even the regard of the Sunnah has departed from our hearts, although the Holy Prophet is promising us his company in paradise even just for loving his Sunnah. In fact the rule is that:

"The one man who considers the ethics of Shari'ah trivial and light, is given the punishment of deprivation of the Sunnah, and the man who considers the Sunnah trivial and light, he is punished with the deprivation of the obligatory religious duties, and he who takes obligatory religious duties to be small is involved in the deprivation of true knowledge (ma 'rifat)."

So when a man considers even the smallest particular and praiseworthy act (mustahab) of the Shari'ah to be petty and does not have the grace to repent for such thinking, he continues to proceed in this path until he comes to such a pass that he begins to raise doubts and objections against the lawful and the unlawful and the principles and beliefs (of the Shari'ah), and in the end washes his hands clean of faith (i.e., loses faith completely). May Allah protect us from such things! Aameen.

Hence, if, unfortunately, any such sentence escapes one's mouth in any company that sounds like a scorn at the Shari'ah, one should immediately repent and seek divine pardon for it, because such an utterance is a token of the lack of love of the Shari' ah and the Prophetic Sunnah, and thereby, besides receiving torture and punishment, one will be deprived of the Holy Prophet's company. For a lover there is no other punishment more severe than this, as someone has well said: -

"Shrewdness in this world consists only in the avoidance of sins. That repentance (taubah) is no repentance at all which may be sacrificed over the glass of wine. Is the

sorrow of separation any the less for burning my heart? It will be a further oppression if the evening-lamp is snuffed off so early."

The Companions' Extraordinary Love for the Holy Prophet

It is stated in a Hadith that the Holy Prophet's freed slave, Hazrat Thauban had become very weak and his body had turned pale. So when the Holy Prophet inquired about his health, Thauban replied: "O Apostle of Allah! I have no disease, it is this much only, that when I do not see you, I feel very aggrieved and I am very much bewildered as long as I do not come into your presence and soothe my eyes. So now I think about the Hereafter, that I will not be able to see you, because even if I get entry into Paradise, you will be in the class of Prophets where I am not able to reach; and if I am not admitted to Paradise, I will never be able to see you and it is in this grievance that I am melting."

It was after this incident that Allah Most High revealed the verse (IV: 69), and Hazrat Thauban was satisfied. Such was the Holy Prophet's value among them (the Companions), and it was for this reason that Allah Most High had selected them to give company to His Beloved Prophet. They had the capability and competence to live in the company of the Chief of the Prophets they had sacrificed themselves for him, and hence, Allah Most High, on account of their attachment to the Prophet and the blessing of his company, had awarded them such high ranks that the highest Gauth and the greatest Qutb of the later times cannot reach the status of the humblest of the humble Companions.

Although there have been born in the Holy Prophet's ummah many such slaves and friends of Allah whose strivings with the unregenerate self are greater than those of most of the great Companions, their prayers, their fasts, their nightly lamentation, their Tahajjud prayers and their reciting of the Quran far exceed those of some of the Companions, yet they cannot reach the rank of the dust of the Companions' soles.

This is in fact the regard and consideration for the Prophetic Sunnah and love for Muhammad It is for this reason that none is entitled to review and criticise the Companions' actions and practices, not because they were in-errant, for the in-errant are the prophets alone from whom the committing of a sin is impossible. But none has the right to open one's lips (take exception) against any one of the Companions' actions; the reason whereof is the same connection of companionship. But if a man

has no love at all for the Holy Prophet ﷺ nor is he committed to the divine commandments, he alone can be the man who regardless, and led by Satan, will keep writing whatever he likes and keep talking whatever he wishes. The decision about which the Just Lord will give tomorrow on the Day of Judgement in the presence of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the Companions.

"Those who do wrong will come to know by what overturning they will be overturned" (XXVI: 227)

Obedience To The Apostle Is Obedience To Allah

Allah Most High says in the holy Quran: -

"He who obeys the Messenger has indeed obeyed Allah, but he who turns away, then we have sent you as a watcher over them." (IV: 80)

The divine statement is very clear that whoever obeys the messenger in fact obeys Allah in the true sense and he who disobeys him disobeys Allah, because the Holy Prophet ﷺ does not say anything on his own; on the contrary, all his statements and acts used to be in accordance with the divine revelation. This fact, as such, has been mentioned in several places in the Quran. The divine statement in Surah-An-Najm is: -

"Nor does he speak of (his own) desire. It is only a revelation revealed. He has been taught (this Quran) by one mighty in power (Jibril)." (LIII: 3-5)

Commenting upon this verse Allamah Ibn Kathir writes that the Holy Prophet's ﷺ knowledge is perfect and his action is in accordance with his knowledge. His path is straight. He is the legislator of the law (Shari'ah) and he maintains the path of moderation. No statement or order of his is the outcome of his own desire and selfish motives. He used to speak out only against those things for which he was ordered by Allah, and that alone used to be expressed by his auspicious tongue. His holy speech is free from suppression and addition, loss or excess. It is stated in Musnad-e Ahmed that (once) the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: "Through the intercession of a single man who will not be a prophet, people equal to those of two tribes or of one tribe will enter Paradise. Those two tribes are the tribe of Rabe'a and the tribe of Muzir." At this a man said: "Isn't the tribe of Rabe'a among the tribe of

Muzir" (that you counted them separately). He said: I say only that which I am made to speak."

There is another hadith in the Musnad-e-Ahmed to the effect that Hazrat Abdullah bin Amr bin al-Aas reported: "Whatever I used to hear from the Holy Prophet I used to write down for committing to memory. But some Quraishites prevented me from doing so and said: 'The Holy Prophet too is a human being; sometimes he speaks out in anger and displeasure also." So I stopped writing. Then I mentioned this thing to the Holy Prophet He said: "Keep jotting it down. By Allah in Whose possession is my life! Nothing but the truth comes out of my tongue."

It says in a Hadith in the Musnad-e Bazzar that the Holy Prophet said: "Whichever thing I report to you from Allah Most High is always free from doubt and suspicion." It says in another Hadith that he said: "I never speak nothing but the truth." At this some Companions said: "But your holiness sometimes also indulges in pleasantry?" He replied: "In pleasantries too the untrue does not come out of my tongue."

It is for this reason that Allah Most High hath ordered the people to follow him because obedience to him is in fact obedience to Allah, as the Holy Prophet has said: - "He who obeyed me obeyed Allah undoubtedly and he who disobeyed me disobeyed Allah undoubtedly. And he who obeyed my amir (commander appointed by me), obeyed me and he who disobeyed my amir disobeyed me."

Why should not the transgression against the Apostle be transgression against Allah when Allah Most Glorious Himself states:

"Nor doth he speak of (his own) desire: It is naught save an inspiration that is inspired."

Hence not to believe in his statement is to reject Allah's statement.

The Prophet Is The Cause Of Difference

It is reported from Hazrat Jabir that some angels came to the Holy Prophet when he was sleeping. The angels said: "For this your master there is an illustration. Describe that illustration."Some angels said: "He is sleeping." Some said, "His eyes sleep but his heart remains awake." The angels said: "The example of the Holy Prophet is like that man, who built a house and therein he laid a dinner-cloth and then sent out a person to give invitations. So he who complied with the invitation entered the house and ate the food and he who did not comply with the invitation neither entered the house nor partook of the food from the dinner-cloth."

Then an angel said: "Interpret it for the Holy Prophet so that he may understand it." One angel said: "He's sleeping." Another said: "His eyes sleep and his heart remains awake." Then the angels said: "That house is Paradise and the person giving invitations is Muhammad himself. He who complied with him complied with Allah undoubtedly and he who disobeyed him disobeyed Allah undoubtedly. And Muhammad is the cause of distinction between the believers and the disbelievers. That is, those who are obedient to him are the believers and those disobedient to him are the disbelievers."

It becomes fully explicit from this Hadith that the Holy Prophet is the cause of difference. That is, one who obeys him and embraces the faith is a believer and one who disobeys and falsifies him is an unbeliever. Similarly the man who believes that his own and other Muslims' salvation lies in the Holy Prophet's auspicious ways and also follows them, is a true Muslim. But if after 1400 years his ways have - Allah forbid! - become old in his eyes and are no more worthy of conformance in the present age; rather, giving up these ways, if the man thinks that progress and salvation lie in the methods and ways of the enemies of Allah and the Apostle, then such a man should very carefully read the words of this Hadith that: "Muhammad( ) is the cause of difference among the people." The Muslims will assess a man according to the prophetic method and good example in this very world and will know whether he is a follower of the messenger of Allah or a follower of Satan. If he deceived the Muslims in this world, he would hear this proclamation on the Day of Judgement:

(It will be said): "And O you Mujrimun (criminals, polytheists, sinners, disbelievers)! Get apart this Day (from the believers)." (XXXVI: 59)

Moreover, the hypocrite will not be able to deceive the Holy Prophet ﷺ at the Fountain of Kausar. The Fountain quenches the highest spiritual thirst of man. The hypocrite will be experiencing the agony of death due to thirst but when he will reach the Fountain the angels will stop him and the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself will say: - "Be away from here, be away from here"!

Hence we should take care of this, in the world itself and cast a look at ourselves if we are following the Holy Prophet ﷺ or someone else.

Save Yourself from Torture

It is reported from Hazrat Abu Musa Ash'ari said that the Holy Prophet ﷺ stated: “The example of myself and this religion with which Allah hath sent me to this world is like that man's who came to a people and said: ‘I have seen an army with my own eyes and I am an open Warner. Save yourself and achieve salvation.’ Then a group of people trusted him and slowly escaped from there and received salvation. And one group of his people falsified him and passed the night in their own houses. As soon as it was morning, an army pounced upon them, killed them and uprooted them totally. So this is the example of myself and the people who follow the religion brought by me, and it is also an example of those people who disobeyed me and falsified the religion brought by me.”

So before the army of the torturers starts torturing, launching an attack at the time of the agony of death, when no aid might come to dispel it, put up the barricades now and secure the borders, the only method of doing, which is to act upon the Holy Prophet's ﷺ auspicious ways. It has been clearly said in the above-mentioned Hadith that the people who obey the Holy Prophet ﷺ are those who follow the truth which he has brought, and not those who claim verbally but their action is contrary to it.

Salvation is exclusively meant For the Sect That Follows the Prophet And His Companions Path

It is reported by Hazrat Abullah Ibn Umar that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: “Such a time, as passed over the Israelites, will surely come for my ummah also, even as the sole of a shoe is like that of the other; so much so that if anyone from amongst the Israelites had flagrantly committed incest with his mother, amongst my ummah too there will be such a man who will do this work. No doubt the Israelites were divided

into 72 sects and my ummah will be divided into 73 sects all of which, save one will go to Hell." The Companions asked: "0 Apostle of Allah! Which is the sect that will go to Paradise"? He said: "That one which stuck to the path on which I and my Companions are."

How comprehensive are the Holy Prophet's teachings by which the right and the wrong and the good and the evil are quickly recognised and the fake and the genuine are distinguished. He said that his ummah would be divided into 73 sects. Now when all of them may claim to be true and to be committed to the religion of Islam, whom should the Muslims acknowledge to be in the right to follow it? For that such a sign and direction has been fixed that the ignorant and the learned, the high and the low, all can easily distinguish between which is the right one and the wrong one.

He said: "Those who stick to me and my Companions' methods are in the absolved sect."

Hence the man who does not follow the Holy Prophet's way and in whose life the Sunnah method is not conspicuous, cannot be followed, although he may be a very great religious divine or religious research scholar, for the simple reason that he is not on the Holy Prophet's and his holy Companions' path. When a man is standing on a path, all his limbs, hands and feet will be on the same path; no part of his body will be away from it. Similarly, in every aspect of life, in sitting and standing, in eating and drinking in moving and walking, in short, in each action, the prophetic pattern should be kept as a model; otherwise, if a man's religion is confirmed to prayer and fasting only, he is not on that path. Just as there may be two parallel ways and a man may set his one foot on one and the other on the other, no one can say about him that he is on the same path. He will be deemed to be on the same path only when both of his feet are on the same path. Then, the Holy Prophet's path is the path of Paradise, and the other is that of Hell and Satan. Now if one traverses the path leading to Hell and thinks that one would reach Paradise, it is simply impossible. Half-verse: - "It's a mere fancy; it's impossible, it's madness."

Everyone can understand that he will reach where he is going. Moreover, if he is walking on both the paths, with one foot on the one and the other on the other, or for some time he walks on one path and for some time on the other, it cannot be said with certainty about such a man that he will reach Paradise. It depends upon this, that before reaching, by death, the place where both the paths come to an end, if Allah gives him some sense and he repairs to the path of Paradise and his condition improves and meets his end on this very path, then it is hoped that -Allah willing - he can reach Paradise.

But if, during life, he continued to walk on both the paths, the paths of Paradise and Hell, and met his end on the path to Hell, it is obvious that then Hell alone will be his abode, for the path ended there and he will have to stop there only. Hence in this world neither anyone's claim of Islam nor the claim of Sunnah is enough unless one continuously walks on the path of the Sunnah.

It is also known from this holy Hadith that the Companions' method is also the criterion of salvation. If 'Allah forbid!' there had been any defect, the Holy Prophet ﷺ would not have used the word "my Companions." If the life of all the Companions was not a criterion, of some it would have been; and it had not been of some, even then the Holy Prophet ﷺ would not have used the word "my Companions," but would have used "some Companions" or any other word of that meaning. But it is not so. In this noble Hadith he has clearly said that "the method that is mine and my Companions,'" that alone is the way of salvation. Similarly, he has said: "My Companions are like stars; whomsoever you follow, you will have received guidance. That is, during dark nights people have to fix the direction for walking by seeing the stars and they reach their desired destination; similarly, during the dark period of deviation from the right path and error, if anyone of the Companions is made a guide and his way of life is adopted, one would be successful and reach one's destination safely.

The Sunnah and The Innovation - Satan's Guile and Deceit

Arabic couplet: -

"The best thing in religious affairs is the Sunnah and the worst of things are the innovations.

Persian couplet-

"He who chose the path contrary to the Prophet's shall never reach the destination." (Shaikh Sa'di).

The eternal enemy of man is Satan. Satan first of all tries to keep man deprived of, or deprives man of, faith (iman). Then if Allah Most High bestows the wealth of faith on any one and also Himself makes arrangement for its protection, Satan tries to prevent such a man from performing acts of faith. Sometimes he tells the man. "Allah is oft forgiving and most Merciful. Whether you do anything or not you'll be forgiven. Then why do you take the trouble unnecessarily?" Sometimes he brings the mountain of

man's sins before him and asks: "After having done so much, even now you cherish hope of forgiveness?" In this way he disappoints man and stops him from doing good deeds. But if anyone of Allah's slaves extricates himself from Satan's fraud and deceit and is bent over backwards to do good deeds, then Satan tries to deflect him from Allah' s and the Prophet's methods and seduces him to follow his own methods.

There is in this world no one more unfortunate than the one whom Satan entangles in his stratagem, guile and deception. Assiduously the poor fellow has been tiring himself with satanic acts in the hope of receiving Allah's mercy and recompense. But in the end receives instead of the Holy Prophet's companies in Heaven, he will have to be the damned Satan's companion in the fire of Hell. And in the world Satan will make fun of him before his own retinue that he (Satan) so ensnared the fellow that he neither received the religion nor the material world; and in the end, too, pointing out this action of his to his followers, he will try to acquit himself. As such, Allah Most High states this in the Quran: -

"And Satan will say when the matter is decided: It was God who gave you a promise of truth: I too promised but failed in my promise to you. I had no authority over you except to call you but you listened to me: then reproach me not, but reproach yourselves. I cannot listen to your cries, nor can you listen to mine. I reject your former act in associating one with God. For wrongdoers there must be a painful torment." (XIV: 22).

Hence Allah Most High in the Quran and the Holy Prophet in the Hadith have warned at several places that Satan is your own enemy. If you take after him, you will go astray. And Satan misleads people in several ways. Allamah Ibn al-Jauzi has written a book entitled Talbis-e-Iblis on the various stratagems and methods Satan employs for misleading Sufis, merchants and professionals of every kind. He does not drive all, with one and the same stick, but he uses different tricks and frauds for different people. The Talbis-e Iblis is a matchless book on this topic.

The Satanic Policy of Averting Man from the Sunnah

Here, in relevance with this topic, we wish to mention as to how Satan removes man from the Holy Prophet's methods and his auspicious Sunnahs, and what stratagems he uses for them. Since a man, by following the Holy Prophet and thus covering the path of Paradise, can enjoy the Holy Prophet's Company in Paradise.

Satan knows it for certain that he has to go to Hell but "since I have deserved Hell - Allah forbid - because of Adam, I will take a large number of Adam's progeny also to Hell with myself." Hence, deflecting people from following and conforming to the Holy Prophet he calls them towards himself to follow him, and in place of the auspicious and holy prophetic ways and methods offers his own methods and ways, which, in the technical language of the Shari' ah are called "innovation" ("bidah"). Lexically, bid'ah means any new thing but in the language of the Shari'ah that new thing is called bid'ah of which there may be no basis in religion and yet may be ascribed to religion.

Sunnat And Bid'at As Defined In Hadith

The Holy Prophet has given the same definition in the following long Hadith: -

Hazrat Irmad bin Sariah reports that, "Once the Holy Prophet led us in the Morning Prayer. Then turning towards us he gave a sermon that was so pithy that tears began to flow from the eyes of the audience and hearts began to tremble with fear. A Companion said: "O Apostle of Allah! This sermon seems to be such as if it is the last and the farewell sermon. So give us some advice (i.e., some consummate thing that we may grasp firmly). At this the Holy Prophet said: 'I advise you to adopt obedience to Allah and to adopt obedience to the amir even though he be a Negro slave. He who survives me will see great dissensions. So keep grasping mine and the well-guided successors' method firmly; follow it and grasp it with your teeth, and keep abstaining from all new things for every new thing in religion is an innovation and every innovation is deviation."

Hazrat Ali says that, by Allah, the Sunnah is the Holy Prophet's method, and innovation is that which may be repugnant to the Sunnah. By this it is known that to

invent things as religion other than the Holy Prophet's methods and the shari'ah brought by him is innovation.

The comminations that we have quoted earlier from the Quran and the Hadith concerning opposition to Allah and the Holy Prophet and the Sunnah are applicable here also. I, therefore, quote here those verses and hadiths that I have not quoted earlier; however, at some places, due to some expediency, repetition is also possible. Allah Most Glorious says: -

"And whoso opposeth the messenger after the guidance (of Allah) hath been manifested unto him, and followeth other than the believer's way. We appoint for him that unto which he himself hath turned, and expose him unto hell - a hapless journey's end." (IV: 115)

Similarly, it is said at another place: -

"Lo! Those who disbelieve and turn from the way of Allah and oppose the messenger after the guidance hath been manifested unto them, they hurt Allah not a jot, and He will make their actions fruitless." (XLVII: 32).

Thus the people whom Satan involves in innovation, throughout their lives they recede from the Shari'ah and undertake wrong strivings and waste their labour; consequently they get nothing but loss and the deeds go to waste.

The Straight Path

It is for this reason that the Sunnah and the Shari'ah which are the Holy Prophet's ways should be grasped firmly and no other way should be acted upon nor believed in. Allah Most High says in the Quran thus: -

"And (He commandeth you, saying): This is my straight path, so follow it. Follow not other ways, lest ye parted from His way. This hath He ordained for you, that ye may ward off (evil)."

It says in a Hadith that is reported from Hazrat Jabir "We were sitting in the Holy Prophet's company. In front of himself he drove a long straight line and said: "This is the path of Allah.' Then he drove two lines on its right and left and said: "These are the satanic paths,' and putting his finger on the central line he recited the above mentioned verse.

It is stated in a tradition of the Tirmizi Sharif that the Holy Prophet said: "Allah Most High has described the example of the straight path like that road on both sides of which there are two walls, having many doors, all of which are open and curtains are hanging on each. At the end of this road is a caller who says: "People! Come all of you to this straight path; don't remain dispersed." In the midst of the path also there is a man. When any man wants to remove the curtains of these doors to see inside, the caller (at the middle of the road) says:

'Ah! Pity! Do not look, do not open it. If you look at it and open it, you will be far removed from this path.' Then, the straight path is Islam and both the walls are the divine limits. The open doors are things declared illegal by Allah. The caller at the end of the road is the Divine Book and the caller from above is a divine adviser who lives in every believer's heart."

Not A Single Iota of the Path of Salvation Can Be Changed

Somebody inquired of Hazrat Abu Mas'ud, "What's the straight path?" "The one," he replied, "On which we found the Holy Prophet it's other end reaches Paradise. There are many paths on its left and right, on which the people are walking and are also calling others to themselves. Whoever betook himself to anyone of these paths, he reached Hell." Then he recited the same noble verse.

It is known from this verse and the hadiths that the path of truth and the straight road is only one, and salvation can be achieved by walking on this path only, even as Allah Most High hath used the singular number for His Own path and the plural number for the paths of deviation.

It is also learnt that the divine path, the path of truth and the path of salvation is only one, while compared to it, the paths of deviation and error are too many. The path of salvation, as said by Hazrat Ibn Mas'ud, is only one and that is the Holy Prophet's path on which the holy Companions walked and went away from this world with success; and then their Followers (Tabi 'in) and the Followers-on (Ta'be Tabi 'in) and other religious august men continued to walk on it.

Time went on changing; people and countries too changed; everything kept changing, but the way the Holy Prophet had offered to the ummah remained unchanged. Those who followed and acted upon it in all circumstances, in sorrow as well as joy, in poverty as well as wealth. Whenever any tyrannous government or any powerful

oppressive ruler wished to change a single serif thereof, Allah's slaves faced them, risked their lives and put an end to such mischiefs. They sacrificed all their possessions to protect this religion and preserved each and every belief and practice of it, until it gradually reached us.

Islamic Commandments Need No Revision

If someone asserts that Islam should be changed according to the modern age as its commandments were particularly meant for the Holy Prophet's time and are no more in accord with the changed times, and are almost impracticable, it would be a great calumny against Allah Most High and the Holy Apostle .

For Allah and His Apostle say that this religion has been perfected and made clear, that it will continue till the Last Day and that no other religion than Islam is acceptable. The holy Quran says: -

"Lo! religion with Allah (is) Al-Islam (The Surrender to His Will and guidance). (III: 19)

Similarly: -

"And whoso seeketh a religion other than Al-Islam (the surrender to Allah) It will not be accepted from him, and he will be a loser in the Hereafter." (III: 85)

For 1400 years it remained practicable and during different periods and different countries people changed themselves and their original ways and manners and yet they lived according to Islam, but now has come the difficulty for the people of this century that they cannot renounce their baser selves and Satan's ways! Should they, therefore, - Allah forbid! - Tamper with Islam and distort it and cast it according to their own wishes? Although The Holy Prophet's statement, is: - "No person amongst you can be a true believer as long as his/her desire does not become subject to the religion that I have brought."

As an answer to the present mischief the above-mentioned prophetic Hadith is quite sufficient, because in the present-day people, finding it opposed to their carnal desires, are anxious to tamper with Islam itself.

The Renovators of Islam Should Rather Think Of Renovating Their Own Faith

There is no need whatsoever of the tampering or changing by the so-called renovators of Islam because, according to the previously mentioned prophetic statement (see 'Islamic Commandments need no Revision), they are automatically ostracised from the group of Muslims. Hence, instead of renovating Islam, they should feel concerned about renovating their own faith.

They may explain this Hadith by saying that this merely insists on the perfecting of the faith. But those who call Islam old and in order to prove it insufficient for the present-day needs have even repudiated the essentials of religion; for such deniers there remains no scope for explaining away. Other people, cautiously, may not condemn them, but if a very valuable treasure of someone is buried somewhere and when even a small child gives information regarding the arrival of thieves there, one is flabbergasted. Hence, the magnificent wealth like that of faith compared to which the most precious treasurers of the world are simply trivial and nothing, should be very carefully renovated at the slightest indication by any one, and one should take a vow not to be careless about it in the future.

In short, our staunch belief is that there is success everywhere in the religion brought by the Holy Prophet and his auspicious ways. There is success in it in every country and every period; and besides this, there is failure in all; but this religion will last till the Last Day. When this world will be brought to an end, decision on the Day of Judgement, as stated in the following Hadith, will be made according to this religion only.

The Holy Prophet says: -"On the Day of Judgement (in the Divine Court) will come deeds." He counted amongst them prayers, fasting, charity, etc. and then said: "Then will come Islam and say:

'Allah is (Safety) and I am Islam.' Allah Most High will say: 'You are right. Today I will take people to task on account of you only and will give rewards because of you only.'"

Predictions Given 1400 Years Ago about Mischiefs’

Hence one should firmly grasp Islam, the religion brought by the Holy Prophet as well as his auspicious ways and auspicious practices; and one should be firm in following them in such a way that even the biggest mischief may not be able to shake him. Mischiefs and mischievous people are usually there in every period and about them the Holy Prophet has already stated: - It is reported by Hazrat Abu Huraira that the Holy Prophet said:

"In the last era there will be cheats and liars who will present before you things neither you nor your forefathers must have heard. So try to guard yourselves from them lest they misguide and entangle you in mischief."

Similarly the Holy Prophet has forewarned about such mischiefs in another Hadith. As such, there is a long Hadith reported by Hazrat Huzaifah in which he says: "I asked: 'O Apostle of Allah! Is there any evil after this good'! He said: 'Yes, there will be callers towards Hell. They will throw those who listen to them and go towards Hell, into Hell.' So I said, 'O Apostle of Allah! Describe their identity before us.' He said: 'They will be from amongst us only and will be speaking in our language only.' I asked, 'Should this mischief reach me, what's the order for me'?

'Take the Muslims' group', said he, 'and their Imam (leader) as indispensable'. I said, 'If there be no group of Muslims (at that time) nor any imam, then'! He said: 'Then keep yourself aloof from all other sects though you may have to be content with the root of a single tree, until death.

Praise be to Allah that the group of Muslims is still flourishing with full splendour and dignity. According to the statements of august men, that time has not come yet that man may have to lead a solitary life. Hence one should definitely adhere to the Muslims' group and save oneself from the satanic mischiefs of the last era. One should grasp the Holy Prophet's ways and practices, because the path of salvation and the way of truth is only Islam, which is the name of the way of life brought by the Holy Prophet and which covers every walk of life. Islam is not the name of mere devotions, prayers and fasting; it is rather a complete way of life.

Warning Regarding the Mischief of Innovation in Hadith

Satan and his devotees and followers invented and offered new methods in the different branches of Islam in every age and every country, and tried their best to deflect people from the ways brought by Holy Prophet The Holy Prophet had already warned the ummah against these mischiefs. It is reported from Hazrat Ayesha that he said: -"Whoever innovates anything in this our religion that is not there in it is apostate."

Similarly, it is reported from Hazrat Jabir that the Holy Prophet (giving a sermon) said "After divine praise, the best utterance is Allah's oration, i.e., the Book of Allah and the best way is that of Sunnah, and the worst affairs are those that have been innovated and every innovation is deviation."

It says in another Hadith that the Holy Prophet said: "Amongst people, three men are most odious in Allah's sight: (1) One who commits a sin inside the Haram; and(2) one who searches the ways of Ignorance in Islam; and (3) one who is bloodthirsty, i.e. one who wants to shed someone's blood unnecessarily.

Mark the severity of the commination in this Hadith that one who leaves the way of Islam and adopts another way is odious in Allah's sight.

Similarly, Hazrat Miqdam says: - “One day the Holy Prophet led us in prayer. Then he sat facing towards us gave a very energetic sermon which brought tears to eyes and caused hearts to palpitate. A man said: "0 Apostle of Allah! It seems as if this sermon is from one who is to say farewell. Please therefore give us advice." He said, ‘I advise you to fear Allah and to hear and obey even if your imam be a Negro slave. (I am saying this) for the reason that he who lives after my passing away will see many dissensions. So stick to my sunnahs and the sunnahs of the well-guided successors, and conform to the sunnahs staunchly; grasp them with your teeth and prevent yourselves from all new things, for every new thing (in religion) is an innovation and every innovation is deviation."

Similarly, the Holy Prophet has said, "A time will come upon my ummah, even as a time had come on the Bani-Israel; fully equal, as alike as one Shoe is to another. Even as one who is equal to the other (of the pair); so much so that if anyone from amongst the Israelites had committed adultery openly, there will be such a man in my

ummah also who will do likewise. And the Bani Israil branched into 72 sects and mine will divide into 73 sects all of which, except one, will go to Hell." The Companions asked, "Which is the sect, O Apostle of Allah"! He said: "That one which will be upon my and my Companions' path." Hence the holy Companions' way which is in fact the Holy Prophet's way and should be grasped firmly. From the holy Companions this way was taken by the Followers (Tabi'in) and from them by the Followers-on (Ta 'ba Tab 'in), and through them, has reached us, stage by stage, in a secure, well-preserved form.

Opining In Islam Is Misleading

From the Holy Prophet's time to our own we should follow Jama't only, through which we have received Islam. Intellect may or may not agree, it should be accepted with eyes shut, for no order of this group reported from the Holy Prophet is such that it may have any conflict with reason or be contrary to it. However, the higher in grade this order is, the reason to understand it too should also be of the same order. Hence if our defective intellect cannot grasp something in it, we must not try to tamper with anything religious. One should try to understand it from learned experts of the subject; or there have been written hundreds of books on this topic in which all the statements of the predecessors have been reasoned out intellectually.

In short, the skirt of this group must not be let off under any circumstances, as otherwise there is fear of destruction.

One Who Lives aloof From the 'Ahl Al-Sunnah'

The Holy Prophet says: "Satan is like a wolf to a man, like the wolf who devours the goat he finds grazing alone on one side. Similarly, Satan too deflects that man who lives aloof from the group (of Companions, Followers, Followers-on and the pious predecessors). Save yourselves from these ravines. Be with the Jama’t (Group) and the common Muslims firmly.

It says in another Hadith: "Anyone who moved off from the Jama't even to the extent of a span, he threw off the collar of Islam from his neck." Another Hadith says: "Certainly Allah Most High will not let my ummah gather at deviation; Allah's succour is with the group; he who separates himself from it will go to Hell."

Moreover, the Holy Prophet has said: "Follow the majority (sawad-e azam) of the Muslims, for he who is separated from it will go to Hell." Hence, as regards belief and action one should stick to and maintain the same Islam that has come down to us through heredity, practice and tradition and on which the whole ummah has kept itself firm so far.

The Sunnah and One's Desires

There is another tradition to the effect that 72 sects will go to Hell and only one will go to Paradise and that is that of the Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah. "Shortly there will be born among my ummah people in whom desires will have seeped, even as the poison of a rabid dog seeps into the bitten man; there is left no vein and no joint in which the effect of rabidity may not have reached." Hence desire should be moulded according to the 1400-year old methods of the Holy Prophet and one's personal desires should be sacrificed on his sayings and deeds; as per the prophetic statement quoted earlier that, "None of you can be a true believer as long as his desire does not succumb to the religion I have brought."

Therefore one should not try to interpolate or introduce into religion things of one's own desire, because as regards innovating the Holy Prophet says that, "Whenever a people innovate a new thing (in religion), Allah Most High takes away one Sunnah in its place. Therefore, it is necessary to keep a firm hold on the Sunnah.

Similarly, Hazrat Hassan ^ says that whenever a people innovate a new thing in religion, in lieu thereof Allah Almighty lifts away a sunnah and does not return it to those people till the last day. It means that those people are deprived of the blessings of that Sunnah forever.

Hence regarding such a man who introduces any new thing in religion the Holy Prophet stated, ‘Anyone who regarded with respect an innovator, he in fact helped in obliterating Islam.’

Innovation Is A Calumny against Allah and The Holy Apostle

The innovation of something new in religion is a malicious accusation of falsehood against Allah Most Glorious, for Allah Himself states: -

"This day I have perfected your religion for you and completed My favour unto you, and have chosen for you as a religion <u>Al-Islam</u>." (V: 3)

So if anyone originated an innovation, it as if, 'Allah forbid!' implies that there was still something lacking in religion. Similarly, it also amounts to - Allah forbid! – a false charge of misappropriation against the Holy Prophet that, it is as if, he did not convey to us some part of the religion, as Imam Malik observes that anyone who invented anything in Islam and considered this new thing better, he - Allah forbid! - accused Muhammad of misappropriation and suppression in conveying the divine commandments. The divine statement is: "This day I have perfected your religion for you." Hence the work which was not a part of religion in the Holy Prophet's time which he neither did himself nor persuaded others to do, cannot be included in religion today also. (AI-l'tesam, vol.1, p.48).

All Other Methods Except the Sunnah Are to Be Rejected

Since there is no other prophet to come after the Holy Prophet it is not permitted to adopt any way of life other than his. His ways of life will be prevalent till the day of judgement, admitting no change therein.

Hazrat Jabir has reported it that the Holy Prophet said: "I have brought unto you a white, bright and clean religion. Even if Moses were alive, he would have had no other way but to follow me."

There is another report from Hazrat Jabir that has most probably been cited afore that once Hazrat Umar bin al-Khattab brought a copy of the Torah in the Holy Prophet's presence and said: "O Apostle of Allah! This is a copy of the Torah." At this the Holy Prophet kept silent. So Hazrat Umar began to read it. The Holy Prophet's bright face began to change. At this Hazrat Abu Bakr told Hazrat

Umar: “Don't you see the Holy Prophet's luminous face"? So Hazrat Umar looked at his face and said: "I seek Allah's protection from Allah's anger and the Apostle's anger. We sincerely agree with Allah's being our Lord, Islam being our religion, and Muhammad being our prophet."

Then the Holy Prophet said: "By that Being in Whose Possession is my life! Even if Moses comes amongst you and you begin to follow him and leave me, you will go astray from the right path. Were Moses alive and had been contemporary with me he too would have followed me."

This is the reason that with the approach of the Day of judgement when Jesus descends from heaven, he too will follow the Muhammadan Law and the Holy Prophet's way of life.

Conformance to the Sunnah Is A Full of Blessing

After the Holy Prophet's advent, all other laws (shari'ahs) and ways of life have been abrogated. Apart from the Holy Prophet's shar'a (law) and practice (Sunnah), nothing is acceptable; and blessing has been bestowed in his method only till the Day of Judgement. The blessing of this method is such that while in former times people could not reach this grade even after a thousand years of labours and austere practices, a Muhammadi (a follower of Muhammad) can reach it within a few years of strivings.

In short, there is great blessing in the Holy Prophet's methods and practices, as has been said in a Hadith: "Live within the circle of the sunnah, even a small deed is auspicious and better than doing too much after involvement in innovation; and every innovation is a deviation and every deviation leads to Hell."

Similarly, the Holy Prophet has said: "Operating within the circle of sunnah, even moderate action, is better than any great austere practices performed after being involved in innovation".

Hazrat Ibn Mas'ud says: "To offer prayers moderately according to the sunnah method is better than labouring hard in the method of innovation".

Apart from the Holy Prophet's method whoever adopts any carnal and satanic way will be deprived of the prophetic intercession, as it says in a Hadith that, “There are

two men who will not receive my intercession: a tyrannous king and the overzealous man who may exceed so much that ultimately he may go beyond the way of the Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jama' ah."

Hence one should save oneself from too much exceeding and excess in religion, as also from innovations, for innovation is Satan's great net his very great stratagem.

Hazrat Ibn Abbas says: "By Allah! I do not know if today there is any other person on the surface of the world whose death Satan may like more, than my dying" He was asked: "Why so"? He replied: "When Satan devises something new in the east or the west and any Muslim comes to me to ask the order regarding it, I guide him to the Holy Prophet's path. Thus the Satan's innovation is thrown back on his face unused".

Moreover, the Holy Prophet also said that even to look at a man who is following the way of the sunnah and who prevents people from following innovations and orders them to follow the sunnah way, is (a part of) devotion. Similarly, there is another Hadith to the effect that whoever fabricated an opinion which is not in the Quran nor is it in accord with the Holy Prophet's Sunnah, he (the fabricator) does not know what his result would be tomorrow, on the Day of Judgement.

Dissociation with an Innovator

Hazrat Abu Ayyub Sakhtiani observes that the more an innovator struggles, the farther he gets from Allah.

Hazrat Sufyan Thauri remarks that, compared to sinning, Iblis (Satan) likes innovation more, because considering a sin to be a sin one can repent for committing it, but innovation is such a deviation that one does not repent for it, for it is not considered a sin. He also remarks that Allah Most High will not give any benefit to the man who heard things of knowledge from an innovator, and one who shook hands with an innovator, who caused distress to Islam.

A man came to the presence of Hazrat Abullah ibn Umar and said that, so and so had sent his compliments to you. Ibn Umar said: "I have heard that he has invented a new thing (bid'ah). If it be so that he is enmeshed in innovation, do not say, "on you also be peace" on my behalf in response to his compliment." (Mishkat: vol. ii, p.23)

Sa'eed bin Kurayz reports that Sulaiman Taimi fell ill. During his illness he began to cry too much. At last he was asked: "Why do you cry? Are you so perplexed by

death"? He said: "No. But the thing is this, that one day I happened to pass by an innovator who was a denier of fate and used to call the created beings masters of free will, and (once) I had saluted him. Now I am terribly afraid that my Lord may not take me to task for it."

Insightful Statements Regarding Innovation

The Companions' Hatred for Innovation

All the holy Companions' position regarding innovation is voiced by Hazrat Abdullah bin Moghaffal ^ in the following words:

"I did not see any one from amongst the Holy Prophet's Companions that he might have nursed as much hatred against anything as he did against innovation" (Tirmizi, vol. ii, p.23).

Punishment For Having Contact With An Innovator

Fuzail bin Iyaz, who is one of the greatest saints, says: "Abstain also from the company of the one fellow who might have (any time) associated with an innovator." He further says that whoever loves an innovator, Allah Most High obliterates all his good deeds and takes away the light of Islam from his heart". (When such be the position for loving or having relations with an innovator, what must be the condition of the innovator himself?).

It is also his statement that no deed of an innovator reaches Allah, and remember well that whoever aided an innovator, aided in the demolition of Islam. And this tradition of the Holy Prophet has already been quoted in previous pages that, "he who honoured an innovator, helped in the demolition of Islam".

Muhammad bin Nadhar says that whosoever paid attention to the talk of an innovator, divine protection is taken away from him and he is left to rely on his own self.

The Innovator's Action Is Not Approved

Laith bin S'ad says, "If I were to see an innovator walk on water, I would not accept him."

When Imam Shafi'i heard these sagacious words of Hazrat Laith bin S'ad, he remarked: "Imam Laith has still understated (Not repudiated enough). Even if I was to see an innovator flying in the air, I would not accept him."

Recompense For Rejecting Innovation

Muhammad bin Sahl Bukhari reports: "We were sitting in the company of Imam Ghazali and he began to censure the innovators. We said: ‘We would prefer to listen to you relating Hadith instead.’

Hearing this Imam Ghazali became furious. He remarked: 'My speaking in repudiation of the innovators, is more dearer to me than sixty years' worship"

In short, many such severe sentences and strictures against innovation and innovators have been reported from the religious elders. And why not, because Satan, through innovation, wants to corrupt and distort the neat and clean Shari'ah brought by the Holy Prophet Hence, even in the prophetic Hadiths such things have been declared to be rejectable, as it is stated in a Hadith reported in the Muslim Sharif: - "Anyone who does a deed about which we have not ordered, that deed is rejectable.”

Sahl Bin Abdullah Tastari's Statement

"Sunnah will depart from one who cherishes friendship with an innovator, and Allah Most High will seize the light of faith (iman) from one who laughs along with an innovator".

Mujaddid Alf-E Sani's Statement

Hazrat Mujaddid Alfe-e Sani states "Works of innovation increase darkness and decrease luminosity, whereas conformance to the Sunnah decreases darkness and increases luminosity".

Thirty Years' Punishment For Loving An Innovator

It is stated in the Fatawa Bazzaziali that Hazrat Abullah ibn Mubarak saw someone in a dream and asked him as to how Allah Most High dealt with him. The man said: "I was reprimanded and held in 30 years to account for this fault only that I had cast looks of affection on an innovator, and Allah Most High asked me as to why I did not nurse enmity against the enemy of His religion.”

Khwaja Ma'soom Sarhindi's Statement

Some of Khwaja Ma' soom Sarhindi's letters on the rejection of innovation are being quoted here. In one letter he says: -"Keep off an innovator. Don't sit with an innovator; rather, don't let him sit in your majlis, for the innovators are the dogs of Hell".

"That path only which the Holy Prophet has treaded is the approved path, which has come out from his personal belovedness. To walk on this path is to conform to the Shari'ah. The man who wants to walk on the Holy Prophet's path, should fully adopt the path of the Shari' ah and should be firm in following the Sunnah and in abstaining from innovation. He should walk between the candles of the Book and the Sunnah so that he may not be involved in the darkness of innovation and Satan's paths". (Hikayaat, p.231).

In another letter he writes: "The execution of the tasks of worship and the performance of duties (Fara'iz), sunnahs (sunan) and the indispensable acts (wajibaat) is bound with refraining from innovation, prohibited acts and abominable works. The more one tries to conform to the Shari'ah and abstain from innovation the more one's internal light will increase, and the way towards the Divine Court will open.

"Conformance to the Sunnah is certainly rewarding, redeeming and an elevator of ranks, there is no probability of contradiction in it. But in all other things besides this there is danger upon danger, rather a satanic path in them. So abstain much from them and be fully cautious, because, after truth, what remains there but deviation? “

"The firm religion (Islam) which has been proven through categorical revelation (wahy) cannot be forsaken merely because of absurd things and superstitions."

The Importance of Retention of Sunnah during the Age of Corruption

In many of Ahaadith the Holy Prophet has insisted upon the ummah to take care of the Sunnah (it is not possible to compute all of them here), particularly at a time when the Muslims may have abandoned the Sunnah and may have instead adopted deviation. For great rewards and recompense have been promised for those who conform to the Sunnah during such time.

As such, Abu Huraira reports that the Holy Prophet said: "He who retained the Sunnah at the time of the corruption of my ummah, for him there is recompense equal to that of a hundred martyrs".

That is, when the ummah, having given up the Sunnah, may be busy in innovations and in disobedience to Allah and the Apostle, if a man is firm in practising the

sunnahs he will get recompense equal to that of a hundred martyrs. The recompense of one hundred martyrs will be given to the man who acts upon the sunnahs during the age of corruption. For a martyr dies fighting only once in the battlefield whereas the man who practises the Holy Prophet's sunnah in a degenerating period, first the alien people and non-Muslims, feeling it to be odd and outlandish, will vex him and make fun of him; and if per chance Allah softened their hearts towards him and they started looking at him with respect instead of contempt, some Muslims take up the gauntlet to despise and humiliate that devotee of the Holy Prophet .

The matter does not remain confined to mere discussion; on the contrary, it often turns into squabbling and fighting. They say: You belong to our community, and your colour and our colour is the same, but you adopt such a behaviour that we feel ashamed of it and thus you are putting all of us to disgrace", etc., etc. So, he is harassed with things like this.

A warrior and martyr gets relief by dying once but this slave of Allah who claims to cherish love for the Apostle and has therefore adopted such behaviour is thoroughly pulverised; his love is put to trial and he has to undergo self-mortification every now and then, as someone has well said: - "What can be there for a lover but misery? What can be there for him but tears, blood and yearning for the beloved"?

A poet has described this in Urdu in the following manner: - ‘Receive hurt upon hurt and be alive; suffer wound upon wound and drink. Do not sigh and seal your lips, for this is love and not a joke.’

On the one hand he will receive such a great recompense, and, on the other, he will be exalted with what was his real objective, as Shaikh Sa' di has said: - "The remedy for one suffering the pain of love is nothing but the beloved's glimpse".

So, in order to please the heart of that lover, besides the spring seasons of paradise, he will be awarded the Holy Prophet's proximity and company. This will be the fruit of his suffering the taunts of his own co-religionists as well as others and of staunchly following the Holy Prophet's sunnahs.

Hence it has been said for the martyr, that he will be one rank below the prophets. And the person who is obedient and submissive to Allah and His Apostle has been given this position that he will enjoy the prophets' company, as it has been said in the following Quranic verse: -

"And whoso obey Allah and the Messenger, then they will be in the company of those on whom Allah has bestowed His Grace, of the Prophets, the siddiqun, the martyrs, and the righteous. And how excellent these companions are." (IV: 69)

So those who obey Allah and the messenger, and carry out their order will enjoy the prophets' company in Paradise and he who loves the Holy Prophet and conforms regularly and continuously to his sunnahs, for him the Holy Prophet has said: "He will have the good fortune of living with me in Paradise". This is indeed the greatest reward. He is a lucky man who happens to receive it. And that is the true life, anything besides this may be called life, but it is in fact death, as some poet has said: -

"It cannot be called life for one separated from the beloved is a dead person; a truly alive person is one who is enjoying union with the beloved".

The Recompense for Reviving A Forgotten Sunnah

In short, the Holy Prophet has very much insisted upon conforming to the Sunnah, as it says in one Hadith: -"Whoever revived anyone of my Sunnahs, which was dying out, will receive from the recompense of the latter." (Both will be rewarded equally, while the numbers of people practising the revived Sunnah multiplies the rewards of the person who revived the Sunnah).

In another Hadith the Holy Prophet giving congratulations, says: "Religion will retract towards Hejaz, even as a snake slithers into its hole, and religion will become secluded only in Hejaz, even as the mountain-goat takes refuge on the mountain-top. Undoubtedly religion appeared as an unfamiliar thing and soon it will be alienated just as it has been introduced. Blessed are those poor (unsung) strangers who, when masses would have corrupted my Sunnah after me, will reform them."

In another Hadith the Holy Prophet says: - "He, who ate legitimate (Halal) things and acted upon the Sunnahs and saved people from mischiefs, will enter Paradise." So a man said: "O Apostle of Allah! Such men are too many these days". He replied, "They will also be there in the time after me".

In one Hadith the Holy Prophet tells the Companions: "You happen to be in such a time that if anyone of you leaves even one-tenth of what you have been ordered to do, he will be ruined. Then will come such a time that if anyone accomplishes even one-tenth of what the people have been ordered to do, he will be absolved."

This Hadith is very encouraging for those whom Allah Most High has granted the grace to act upon His religion in any degree. They should not give up their action, considering it to be small and scanty. It is usually a very great deception of the Satan. One should continue to act upon the Sunnahs as much as one can. Who knows which act of ours might please Allah whereby we might succeed and reach the destination safely.

We should be staunchly active in the Sunnah method, for the Holy Prophet has said: "I leave among you two things. As long as you keep hold of them, you will not go astray: one is Allah's Book, i.e., the holy Quran, and the other is the Sunnahs of Allah Apostle."

The words in another tradition are: "I am leaving among you two heavy things. As long as you keep grasping them, you will not deviate: one is Allah's Book and the other is my Sunnah. Whenever the clutch of the Sunnah is left, there will be sheer deviation.

As Hazrat Ibn Mas'ud has also said that the man who wishes to present himself as a Muslim in the Divine Court tomorrow on the Day of Judgement, he should make sure to say prayers at a place where the prayer-call (azan) is given (i.e. in the mosque), because Allah Most High has promulgated such Sunnahs through our Prophet which are guidance from one end to the other. Among them are these congregational prayers also. If you start offering prayers in your own houses, just as so and so you will become one who forsake the prophetic sunnah, and just understand that if you give up the Holy Prophet's sunnah, you will go astray.

Submission to the Holy Companions and The Pious Predecessors

Now let us see how much the Holy Companions, Followers, Followers-on and the pious predecessors used to be concerned and careful about conformance to the Sunnah, conformance to the Shari'ah and in carrying out each and every divine order.

Ordinarily the lives of these pious souls were exactly a specimen of the Holy Prophet's life; they were not prepared to budge even to the extent of a hair from this auspicious life. In journey, in residence, in distraction, in comfort, in short, in every condition, they used to be inquisitive as to how the Holy Prophet had behaved on such an occasion; then, acting upon his method, they used to speak

delightfully and with pride that they had seen their beloved Prophet acting like that.

According to them, even a moment's opposition to the prophetic action was to involve oneself in destruction, whereas the condition of our present age is such that a large number of people have arisen in the modern group who consider the prophetic way of life an obstruction to progress and therefore they are always after removing it lock, stock and barrel. What a tremendous oppression it is upon themselves as well as on others!

"Those who do wrong will come to know by what a (great) reverse they will be overturned." (XXVI :227).

Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq's Speech

When Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq was made caliph, he delivered a khutba before the people. In it, after describing Allah's praise and laudation, he said: -"0 People! I have been appointed the amir of your caravan though I am not better than you are. If I work properly, help me and if I do not work well, correct me. Truthfulness is a deposit and falsehood is defalcation. The weak amongst you is strong in my sight. I will surely try to remove his pain and suffering. And the strong amongst you is weak to me I will - Allah willing - realise the right from him fully....When obscene things spread among any nation, calamities generally continued to descend upon them. As long as I obey Allah and His messenger, you should obey me, and if I do not obey Allah and His messenger, then obedience to me is not incumbent upon you. (Now prepare for prayer)."

The Reason for Perfect Obedience

In short, Siddiq-e Akbar's entire life was a practical specimen of the Sovereign of the Worlds, the Prophet’s holy life. At every step, every movement and every pause his aim used to be this only as to what the Holy Prophet's procedure on such an occasion and condition was and what he had said under such a situation.

In fact the more a man loves a person the more he wishes to imitate the beloved's works, i.e. copy him/her in every thing. The love Hazrat Siddiq-e Akbar had for the Holy Prophet he did not have for anyone else. Scores of facts and incidents of this

love have been related in books of history. To give an idea and to serve as a specimen an incident or two are quoted here.

After the Holy Prophet's death the effect of the pain of separation and the sorrow of estrangement on Hazrat Siddiq-e Akbar was so deep that he could not bear to hear his holy name. Accordingly, during his period of caliphate, when he made Hazrat Umar his deputy and went for umrah, some men came to see him there and the moment they saw him they greeted him saying: "As-Salamo alaika Ya Khalifatu Rasulullah ().

Hearing his beloved's name in their greeting Hazrat Siddiq-e Akbar began to weep bitterly. Then along with his father Abu Quhafa he went to his house, took a bath and then came out. Again the people came to meet him. Walking ahead of them he was inculcating patience to them as regards the Holy Prophet and was bitterly weeping.

Then due to this pain and sorrow of separation he fell ill; and the nature of this sickness itself is such that it goes on increasing day by day. Medication and medicine act as fuel in a burning hearth; rather the very mention of this disease is not less than rubbing salt on wounds. Even if you keep the patient of this disease on a riverbank or in a magnificent mansion in a royal garden, still all this privacy, this recreation and all these attractive and fascinating scenes will only prove as the means of increasing and intensifying the disease.

It is indeed paradoxical and unintelligible that it is called a disease and it is said to be love and a madness and yet one takes a pride in it and invocations are made for increase in it, as Tajwar Najibabadi had said: -"Why shouldn't one, whom the Beloved's glance may acquaint with in secret, pride oneself over one's goodness of fortune? Sorrows were freed from the care of the two worlds. May Allah lengthen the sequence of your madness!”

In brief, Siddiq-e Akbar went on melting in this disease and burning in this fire. The auspicious body kept melting and day by day he became weaker and weaker. So when a physician examined him during the last phase of his life, he remarked that his (Hazrat Abu Bakr's) heart was boiling from inside like a casserole and it seemed as if he had received a severe shock.

Finally, in treading the path of love he at last reached his beloved, as the poet has said: -

"0 bird of morning (Bulbul)! Learn love from the moth,
for that burnt one gave up his life without making any sound."

His Last Will

Hazrat Siddiq-e Akbar made a reference of his obedience to the Apostle and his conformance to religion in his last will itself. He dictated it at the time when he nominated Hazrat Umar Farouq in his place. Hearing of this some people approached him and said to him: "What will you answer to your Lord when He will question you regarding your nominating Umar as caliph? You are making Umar caliph though you very well know his stern manner".

Hazrat Abu Bakr was lying on his deathbed. He said: "Help me to sit" and then he said "Do you frighten me as regards Allah? That man is in loss who took the fare of tyranny in your affair. I will say, 'My Allah! I have made such a man caliph over the people, who is good among your creatures'! Then he said, "Go and convey what I have said to the people who are behind you". Then he lay down and dictated the following will: -

"In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. It is that agreement which Abu Bakr bin Abi Quhafa has made during the last leg of his journey from the world and while stepping into the Hereafter - the Hereafter where even the unbeliever will be a believer and the sinful (Fajir) will also admit with certainty, and the denier of the Hereafter will also confirm it. Indubitably I have made Umar bin Khattab, khalifa over you people. So now carry out his order and obey him. I have not been remiss in doing good to Allah's and His Apostle's religion and to my own self and to you. If I did justice (and about him too my expectation is the same and my knowledge too about him is the same); and if I did contrary to it, then there is reward and punishment for every man in accordance with his deeds. As for me, I have intended good only, and I am not aware of the Unseen (ghayb). '***Those who do wrong will come to know by what a (great) reverse they will be overturned.'*** (XXVI: 227). And peace and Allah's mercy be upon you!"

Insistence Upon Hazrat Umar
To Conform To The Sunnah

After Siddiq-e Akbar had stated his will, he sent a man to Hazrat Umar to summon him and told him many things in which he especially insisted upon him to conform to the Sunnah. Accordingly, he said: "O Umar! The ‘malicious’ nursed malice against you and the ‘beloved’ loved you, and this is a tradition continuing from ancient times, that enmity and antagonism are cherished against goodness". Hazrat Umar said: "I have no need of khilafat". Hazrat Abu Bakr said: "But the office of caliphate requires you. You have seen the sovereign of the Two Worlds, you have been in his company, and you have seen that the Holy Prophet always gave preference to us over his self, so much so that we used to give to the members of his household the remainder of the gifts that he used to give us. And you have seen me and have lived with me. As for me, I have followed that noble being who was before me. By Allah! I am not talking to you in sleep, as if in a dream, and I am not giving these depositions whimsically. Undoubtedly I am in the way in which there is no crookedness.

O Umar! You should know, no doubt there are some rights for Allah in the night which He does not accept in the day and there are some rights in the day which He does not accept in the night. And on the Day of Judgement whoever's balance of deeds will be heavy will be so on account of such conformance to the Truth; and its right too for being heavy is that there may be nothing in it but truth. And on the Day of Judgement the people whose scales of deeds will be light will be the same who must have followed falsehood. Obviously balance of deeds can only be the thing which may imbalance with nothing but falsehood. No doubt the very first thing I warn you about is your own inner self, and I also order you to abstain from the people. The people have begun to cast glances on very lofty things and their skin of desires has been inflated with air. But now there will be safety from lapses for the people.

So you now prevent the people from falling into errors, for now they will always entertain apprehension from your side and they will fear you, as long as you fear Allah. This is my will, and I salute you".

Thereafter Hazrat Abu Bakr invoked blessings for Hazrat Umar. He also invoked that "O Allah! Make Umar one of those good caliphs who may follow the instruction of Your Prophet of Mercy and follow those who are good after Your Prophet may follow him and reform the subjects for him". Ameen!

Hazrat Umar's Consummate Conformance

In fine, the holy Companions and the accomplished saints used to assess their society and every walk and every moment of their life with the holy pattern of life of the Chief of the Two Worlds always careful and vigilant lest they should be living contrary to it.

Thus when Hazrat Umar was made caliph, a stipend was fixed for him from the public treasury. Gathering the people in Madina, he said: "I used to do business but now you have made me busy in this work. So now what should be the means of living"? People made suggestions for different quantities. Hazrat Ali (May Allah honour his face!) was sitting quietly. Hazrat Umar asked him, "What's your opinion"? He said, "Whatever may suffice you moderately". Hazrat Umar liked this opinion, and accepted it and a moderate quantity of stipend was fixed.

Once in a majlis in which Hazrat Ali, Hazrat Usman, Hazrat Zubair and Hazrat Talha were also present it was proposed, that as Hazrat Umar lived in straitened circumstances his stipend should be increased, but no one dared to mention it to him. So all these holy Companions went to his daughter, Hazrat Hafsa , who being one of the holy wives was also a Mother of the Faithful, and tried to learn of Hazrat Umar's opinion and get his permission through her; and at the same time requested her to keep them anonymous.

When Harat Hazfsa mentioned it to Hazrat Umar, signs of anger appeared on his face and he inquired for knowing the name of those who proposed it. But Hazrat Hafsa said: "First let me know your opinion". Hazrat Umar said: "Had I come to know their names, I would have changed their faces, that is, I would have given them such severe punishment that scores of it would have shown on their faces. Well, tell me what was the Holy Prophet's best dress in your house"? She replied, "Two ochre-coloured pieces which he used to put on, on Friday or when any delegation came". Then he asked, "What's the finest food that was being eaten in your house"? She said: "Our staple food was barley-bread. Once we overturned the ghee-can and emptied and spread the drip of ghee on hot breads which the Holy Prophet was eating with relish and was also shared with others". Then he asked, "Which was the best bedding in your house"? She said, "There was a thick cloth. In summer we used to spread it in four folds and in winter half of it was spread and half we used as a covering".

Hazrat Umar said, "Hafsa! Convey this thing to those people, that the Holy Prophet () has set a measure by his conduct and has considered hope (Hereafter) sufficient. I too will follow his holy self The example of my two companions' (the Holy Prophet and Hazrat Abu Bakr) and myself is like that of those three men who may walk on the same road. "The first man went with a fare and reached his goal. The second too followed the first; he walked like him and reached the first. Then the third man started walking. If he walks like them (in their path) he will meet them and if he walks contrary to their method, he will never be able to meet them".

Diligence for the Sunnah

In spite of following the religion and the Shari'ah and conforming to the Holy Prophet so strictly he used to be always apprehensive lest the skirt of the Sunnah should slip off his hands. So he used to tell the holy Companions to warn him if they at any time they found him diverting even a little from the way of the Sunnah.

Hence when the Holy Prophet's famous Companion, Hazrat Ma' az bin Jabal went as an envoy to the court of the Caesar of Rome, as regards the contemporary caliph he once said: "Our chief is Primus inter pares, an individual amongst us. If he follows the Book of our religion and our Holy Prophet's method, we will continue him as our chief, but if he follows anything else besides these, we will fire him. If he steals, we'll amputate his hand, an if he commits adultery or fornication, we will stone him to death. If he abuses anyone, the abused person can also abuse him in the same way; and if he harms anyone, he will have to compensate for it. He does not hide behind four walls to conceal himself from us. He does not behave proudly with us. As regards booty of war he cannot give himself preference over us. Among us his position is that of an ordinary man:'

Once, giving an address, Hazrat Umar asked the audience: "Gentlemen! What will you do if moving off from the prophetic way I incline towards the world"? Immediately a commoner stood up and drawing out his sword from the sheath, said: “We'll cut off your head.” Just to test him Hazrat Umar browbeat him: "Do you say this regarding me"? He said, "Yes, yes, I say this regarding you". Hearing this Hazrat Umar said: "All praise is for that Allah Who hath created such people among my community that if I walk crookedly, they can put me right".

Hazrat Umar's Admirable Manner with his Fellow Companions and his Subjects

Boldness of Hazrat Umar's Subjects

In spite of his being such a brave and awesome statesman and sovereign, the behaviour of Hazrat Umar ^ had encouraged the people to speak so freely, candidly and bravely before him. This can be estimated only by looking at various historical incidents.

Accordingly, after the conquest of Iraq most of the august men had married Christian women, because there is permission to wed scripturary women. Hazrat Umar wrote to Hazrat Huzaifa al Yamani that he disapproved of such things. The latter replied: "Is this your personal opinion or a legal order"? (Shari) Hazrat Umar wrote that it was his personal opinion. Hazrat Huzaifa wrote back: "To follow your personal opinion is not incumbent upon us."

A Bedouin's Candidness

A similar incident is reported of a Bedouin. When a severe famine occurred in Arabia during the Farouqi regime, the great Farouq's condition became strange: as long as the famine lasted he did not eat mutton, fish, ghee or any other delicious thing. Fearfully he used to invoke. "0 Allah! Destroy not Mohammed's ummah as a punishment of my evil deeds!"

The statement of Hazrat Umar's slave, Aslam, is from the worries that exercised Hazrat Umar' s mind during the period of famine, it appeared that if the famine did not come to an end he would die of this sorrow, although he had made matchless arrangements for reducing the rigours of famine.

During that spell of famine came a Bedouin and he recited the following verses before him, "O Umar! If there is pleasure, it is the pleasure of Paradise. Clothe my daughters and their mother. By Allah! You'll have to do this". Harrat Umar said: "What will happen if I don't do as you say? The Bedouin said: -"You'll be questioned regarding me on the Day of Judgement and you will be flabbergasted. Then you'll have to go either towards Hell or towards Paradise".

Hearing this, Hazrat Umar wept so much that his auspicious beard was drenched in tears. Then he said to his slave, "Give my shirt to him for I have no other thing with me at present:'

Farouq-e A'zam, the Commander of the Faithful, possessed such an awesome personality and was so valiant and brave that great monarchs, Caesar and Khosroe used to tremble on hearing his name, but he was so kind-hearted that on seeing such persons in distress his heart used to melt and accusing himself for their distress he used to weep profusely.

An example of Hazrat Umar's Kindness and Wisdom

Once he was patrolling at night. A woman, sitting on the terrace, was reciting some verses. One couplet meant:

"The night is dark and goes on lengthening and my husband is not near me with whom I may play".

Her husband had gone for jihad and, love-torn, she was singing such painful couplets. Hazrat Umar was very much aggrieved. He remarked: "I have inflicted a great severity on the women of Arabia. Then he came to Hairat Hafsa (his daughter) and asked her as to how many days a woman could live without her husband. She said: "Four months:' Next morning he issued an order that no Solider should live away from home for more than four months.

His Sorrow over the Condition of A Decrepit Man

Once he was feeding some men. He saw that a man was eating with his left hand. He went to him and asked him to eat with the right hand. The man said that he had lost his right hand in the Battle of Muta. This melted Hazrat Umar's heart. He sat down near him and began to cry and said: "Alas! Who help's you to make ablution? Who washes your head and who clothes you"? He then appointed a servant for him and himself provided for him all the necessary things i.e. Home help in today's welfare state.

In short, Hazrat Umar Farouq throughout his life practised the prophetic sunnah and established an example and a procedure for the ummah to bring the prophetic pattern into practice, implying that this is called true following and consummate conformance.

Besides this, orally too he used to be very careful in insisting upon the common run of Muslims generally and the commanders and generals of the army particularly that they should at no moment be away from submission to the Holy Prophet and that they always keep this rope around their necks.

Insistence upon the Commanders of the Army to Obey the Apostle

Accordingly, when he appointed Hazrat S'ad bin Abi Waqqas who is reckoned amongst the high-ranking Companions of the Chief and Pride of the Two Worlds and who as a relative was also the Prophet maternal-uncle, as the commander of the army for dispatch to Iraq, as advise he told him: -"O Sa'd! May this thing, with regard to Allah, not deceive you that you are called the Holy Prophet's maternal-uncle and Companion. Undoubtedly, Allah Most High does not efface evil with evil but removes evils through good deeds. Indubitably, there is no relation between Allah and anyone; if there is any relation and connection, it is of obedience.

The noble and the ignoble among the people are all equal unto Allah's sight. Allah is the Lord of all of them and all are His slaves; they have had superiority over each other by reason of their individual abstinence, and those ranks that are with Allah they can be achieved by obedience. Be careful of that which the Holy Prophet remained constant. The Prophet came and passed away, leaving us behind. Grasp his command as necessary, for that command is the true command. This is my only advice. Save yourself from leaving it. If you leave it and show disinclination towards it, your deeds will be wasted and you will become one of those people who are involved in loss.'

Similarly he once said, "Allah Most Holy sent the Holy Prophet on a mission. We people confirmed in him and then conformed to him. He demonstrated by practice upon every thing which Allah Most High ordered him to do. He continuously gave alms to the poor until Allah Most High sent death to him in this condition. Then Hazrat Abu Bakr became his khalifa (successor). He continued to act upon the Holy Prophets Sunnahs until Allah Most High sent death to him and then made me khalifa."

Hazrat Abdullah Bin Umar's Condition

In fact, all of the holy Companions of the Holy Prophet were consummate followers of the Sunnah; they used to imitate each and every prophetic action. But some Companions, in this too, commanded a distinguished position, for they used to be extremely careful about it. One such Companion was Hazrat Abdullah ibn Umar . Not only while residing in the holy city Madina did he retain in his mind each and every pause and movement of the Holy Prophet's as to what he used to do at a particular time, but during a journey too he used to be very much concerned about it, so much so that when the Holy Prophet went for the Hajj-journey, Abdullah ibn Umar committed to memory every action of his and every place as to where he dismounted from the dromedary, (she camel) where he performed the instinja (ritual purification) where he did ablution and where he said the prayer. He remembered every action, and its time and place. So whenever he went for Hajj or happened to pass along the road, he would get down at the place where the Holy Prophet had stopped for convenience, even though he really did not need to, and would perform ablution where his noble master had performed it. It is because of this care that indications of the Holy Prophet's auspicious route for Hajj and its Sunnahs and stages are found mostly in Abdullah Ibn Umar's traditions.

When oppression and tyranny were at their peak during Hajjaj bin Yusuf's time, Abdullah ibn Umar intended to go for Hajj .The attendants tried to dissuade him as the routes were not safe. Perhaps he might not reach Mecca and hence it was not opportune to embark on a journey. But he did not agree and remained firm in his intention and said: "When the Holy Prophet had begun the journey with the intention of performing the umrah, there was no peace at that time also. Danger was everywhere. That is, postponement of this journey on account of danger would be contrary to the Sunnah. "And if I am stopped from reaching the House of Allah (K'abah), even then the Holy Prophet's Sunnah will be discharged, for he too had been stopped and he, having slaughtered the sacrificial animal and getting tonsured, had put out the Ihram. I am also taking the sacrificial animal with me. If I am stopped, I too will do the same thing which the Prophet had done on this occasion."

Hazrat Bilal

Hazrat Bilal's Two Special Services

Who is there who may be unaware of Hazrat Bilal's intense love for and losing himself into the Apostle's contemplation. Prior to Islam and during the incipience of Islam, his life passed in slavery, amid extreme woes, afflictions and troubles. After manumission, (release from slavery) he remained in the company of the Holy Prophet during residence and in journeys, and used to be his muezzin (one who gives call for prayers) and treasurer.

After the Holy Prophet's demise he dedicated his entire life to the execution of a prophetic statement. Of the former two services the one of the treasurer's ceased with the Holy Prophet's death and the second, of muezzin's became unendurable for him due to his utmost and excessive love for his noble master.

Accordingly, it is reported that when the Holy Prophet passed away and the obsequies had not yet been performed, Hazrat Bilal continued to give the prayer-call as usual. Whenever he uttered the sentence "I testify that Muhammad is Allah's messenger" in the azan, the people present in the mosque used to burst into tears. After the burial when Hazrat Abu Bakr asked him to give the prayer-call, Hazrat Bilal said, "If you had manumitted me for this that I may live with you, then it is indeed a way thereof; and if you had manumitted me for the sake of Allah, then leave me to that Allah for Whom you had freed me." Hazrat Abu Bakr said, "I freed you for the sake of Allah". Hazrat Bilal said, "Now, after the Holy Prophet I will not give the prayer-call for anyone". After this there are one or two more incidents of Hairat Bilal's calling out the azan which will be related shortly.

The Last Service

In short, after Hazrat Abu Bakr passed away, Hazrat Bilal went for jihad from the holy city Madina to Syria.

So when, on the occasion of the conquest of the Bayt al-Muqaddas, the Commander of the Faithful Hazrat Umar, at the Christians' request, went there to conclude the treaty of peace - the event of which is also very wonderful and strange but for fear of prolixity and because it is irrelevant to the topic is not being mentioned here - he

mounted a horse at Jabia, where he had collected all the governors and officers of the surrounding places, to go to Bayt al-Muqaddas. But the horse under him developed a limp because all its hoofs had fallen off. Noticing this Hazrat Umar dismounted. The people presented a fine horse of Turkish origin. This horse was pert and nimble. When Hazrat Umar mounted it, it began to prance at which he said: "You wretch! Where have you learnt this gait of pride"? Saying this he got down and walked on foot. When Bayt al-Muqqaddas came near, Hazrat Abu Obaidah and other army generals came to welcome him.

Looking at Harrat Umar's dress and paraphernalia of ordinary kind, the Muslims were feeling embarrassed as to what would the Christians say in their hearts. So the people presented a Turkish horse and a fine dress. At this Hazrat Umar remarked, "The honour Allah hath bestowed on us is the honour of Islam and it is sufficient for us".

In short, he entered the Bayt al-Muqaddas in such condition. He entered the mosque first of all and approaching the Prophet Dawood’s mihrab (arch) he recited the verse of Dawood's prostration from the Sura-e Saud and performed a prostration; and then he stayed here for several days.

Hazrat Bilal's Asceticism

One day Hazrat Bilal came here to Hazrat Umar's presence and complained against the military people, saying: "0 Commander of the Faithful! Our officers eat flesh of fowls and bread of the finest wheat flour, whereas the common Muslims do not have even ordinary food".

Hazrat Umar looked towards the officers. They said: "In this country every thing is cheap. For as much price as one gets bread and dates in Hejaz, for the same price fine flour and flesh of fowls are available here".

Hazrat Bilal's Prayer-Call In The Aqsa Mosque

During the same period, one day Harrat Umar, at the time of prayer, asked Hazrat Bilal to give the prayer-call. Hazrat Bilal said: "I had resolved that after the Holy Prophet I will not give the prayer-call for anyone. But today, and only today, I will carry out your order"

So he began to recite again. When he reached the words "*Ash'hado anna Muhammadur Rasulullah*", all the Companions were reminded of the auspicious prophetic era. All of them burst into tears. Abu Obaidah and Ma'az bin Jabal wept so much that they became restless and Harrat Umar began to sob. This mood lasted for quite some time.

Hazrat Bilal then came to reside in Damascus. During this stay at Damascus he once dreamed of the Holy Prophet , the Holy Prophet said, 'Bilal! What is this oppression? You never come to us.' When he woke up he went to the holy city of Madina. There Hazrat Hasan and Hazrat Husain, the grandchildren of the prophet requested him to shout the prayer-call.

There was no chance of refusing their request. He began to recite the prayer-call. When the sound of the prayer-call of the prophetic era reached people's ears, a loud lamentation arose in Madina. Crying women stirred out of their houses. After a few days' stay there, Hazrat Bilal returned to Syria and then lived there permanently and continued taking part in jihad.

When the time of his death approached, his wife, saying, "Alas! Alas!' began to lament. At this he said, "What a pleasurable thing it is that tomorrow I will be meeting Muhammad and his Companions".

Around A.H. 20 he passed away and was buried in Damascus (Syria).

The Companions Conformance

Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari

Once the Holy Prophet presented a slave-woman to Abu Ayyub Ansari, with the instruction, 'treat her well, for as long as she lived at our place we found her good.'

Taking her along with him, when Abu Ayyub reached home, he said, "I do not find a better answer to the Holy Prophet's advice than this that I may set her free". And with these words he set her free at once.

These august men used to try to execute the prophetic orders in the best possible manner, and with great delight and love, considering it a honour, they used to carry out the prophetic order with as much perfection as they could command.

Hazrat Harith Bin Nauman

Hazrat Harith Bin Nauman had lost his eyesight. He had tied a rope from his swing up to the door of his room. Whenever any needy man came, he would take something from his knapsack, go up to the door with the help of that rope and give it to the needy person with his own hands.

When the members of his household told him that they could have done soon on his behalf, he would say: "I have heard it from the Holy Prophet that to give (alms) to the needy person with one's own hands saves man from violent death". (Narrator: Tabrani).

Hazrat Abdullah Bin Mas'ud

Once in the Prophet's Mosque, the Holy Prophet for some reason addressing the Companions said: "Sit down, sit down!" Hazrat Ibn Mas'ud at that time happened to be near the gate. The moment he heard the call, he at once sat down. He got up from there only when the Holy Prophet called him near.

Hazrat Abu Zer Ghiifari

Once he was irrigating his field from the pond when some people came to him and due to their carelessness the earthen dike of the channel was broken and water began to flow out.

When Hazrat Abu Zer Ghifari saw the water going to waste, he immediately sat down and lay down there in the mud. The people who were present there were astonished and asked him what this action was. Abu Zer replied, “I felt angry at those people's carelessness but at the same time came to my mind the Holy Prophet's statement that, ‘when you feel angry, sit down, and if anger remains still, lie down,’ so I put that instruction into practice.”

Hazrat Abu Darda

Once he sought permission from Hazrat Umar to go to Syria. Hazrat Umar said, ‘I permit you only on one condition that you become a governor.’ He replied that he did not want to become a governor. Hazrat Umar said that then he would not permit him to go there. So Abu Darda said, ‘Alright! I will go, but I will teach the prophetic Sunnah to the people and will lead them in prayer". At this Harrat Umar permitted him and he went there.

How great was the importance of the prophetic Sunnah in their eyes that to teach it to the people and to exercise them in prophetic methods and manners he undertook a journey to Syria. Accordingly, he consummated what he had said as it is reported in a tradition that after some time Hazrat Umar went to Syria to inspect him and others. He reached there without intimating anyone and did not enter the habitation during day. After it was night he asked Hazrat Yerfa let us go. Then they went to several amirs and officers (collectors), and before reaching their places Hazrat Umar used to predict, "0 Yerfa! You would see that there would be storey teIlers near them. A lamp would be alight and they would be sitting on beds of silk that are from the Muslims' booty of war. When you salute them, they would answer but they would not permit you to enter as long as they do not know who you are.

As such, they went around and found the same scene which Hazrat Umar predicted, and Hazrat Umar rebuked all of them for this (luxury). Then he said: "Now take me to my brother Abu Darda. We would see neither storytellers with him nor lamp nor a bolted door. Having spread gravel he would be reclining against housing (cloth covering for horse). There would be a thin blanket upon him to ward off cold. When you salute him, he would answer it, and when you ask

permission to enter, it would be promptly given and he would not ask you who you are.'"

Hazrat Yerfa reports: "We started walking and when we reached the door Hazrat Umar said, "As-Salamo 'alaikum" (Peace be on you!). He answered, 'Wa'laikum as-Salam,' (On you also be peace). Then Hazrat Umar said, 'May I come in?' He replied, 'Yes, come in.' The door pushed open, it was not bolted. Accordingly we entered the dark cell. Due to darkness Hazrat Umar began to grope for him until he found him. He groped his pillow. It was housing and his bedding consisted of small gravel. When his blanket was felt, it was a thin one. Hazrat Abu Darada asked: 'Who is there? Is it the Commander of the Faithful (Amir-ul-Momineen) Hazrat Umar said yes. Hazrat Abu Darda said, 'We have met after a long time. One year has passed.' Hazrat Umar said: 'May Allah have mercy on you! Had I not provided for you liberally? And had I not done this and that for you?'

Hazrat Abu Darda said, 'O Umar! Do you remember that hadith the Holy Prophet had told us?' Hazrat Umar asked, 'Which Hadith?' He said, 'The Holy Prophet has said that the provision of life for every one of you should be as much as a rider's fare' (What a rider can carry easily). Hazrat Umar said: 'No doubt the Holy Prophet has said the same'. Hazrat Abu Darda said, 'O Umar! What did we do after him?'

The narrator reports that thereafter both of them kept weeping till dawn.

The Religious Elders care for the Sunnah

A Narrative by Hazrat Shaikh Ul Hadith Concerning Hazrat Hasan's Dying Wish

Our late chief and our spiritual preceptor Maulana Hazrat Shaikh al-Hadith (may his shadow never grow less!) writes at one place that when Hazrat Hasan was given poison and it began to act, he sent his younger brother, Hazrat Husain, to Hazrat 'Ayesha to seek her permission to be buried in her house near his maternal grandfather. Though a severe battle, like the battle of Jamal had taken place between her and Hazrat Ali, Hazrat Hasan's father, she gladly gave permission. Thereafter Hazrat Hasan said to Hazrat Husain, "Perhaps, in my lifetime, due to having a sense of modesty and consideration for me, she may have permitted, but seek her permission again after my death. If she willingly permits, then bury me there, otherwise bury me in the general grave-yard."

When Hazrat Husain sought her permission again after his brother's death, she said, "Yes, yes, with greatest respect".

Observance of personal respect and discipline remained order of life, even during conflicts and mutual antagonism. Banu Umayya (tribe) members opposed burial of Harrat Hasan next to the grave of prophet saying that Hazrat Usman (the third khalif) was deprived of this privilege, and so should Harrat Hasan.

But despite this Hazrat Husain pushed forward the ruler of Madina, Sa'eed bin al-Aas (who was an Ummayad), to lead the funeral prayer, and said, "This is the Sunnah."

Do we also, in regard for Sunnah, deal like this with our enemies? To ostracise from the localities and sack from imamate for ordinary, flimsy reasons is a daily event with us. If there are a few such incidents, one may enumerate them but where incidents of this type be thousands and millions, how long can one count them? (AI-I'tedaI)

Hazrat Ali Bin Husain Bin Ali, Imam Zayn Al-A'bidn (Great grandson of the Prophet)

He was a genuine Fatimid Sayyid, but to obliterate the pride of lineage practically, he had married his daughter to a slave and he himself married a slave-girl after having set her free.

When Caliph Abd al-Malik came to know of it he wrote him a letter and rebuked him for this act. Hazrat Imam wrote the reply on it as under: -"The Holy Prophet's good conduct is a pattern for us. Having set free Safia bint Hayy bin Akhtab who was a slave-woman, he had married her himself, and manumitting his own slave, Zaid bin Harith, Holy prophet had given his cousin (father's sister's daughter), Zainab bint Hajash, in marriage to him (A slave). And we are not more honourable than the Apostle of Allah ."

May we be sacrificed over these august men's fervour for conformance that if the Holy Prophet set free a slave-woman and married her, he also did exactly the same. Similarly if the Holy Prophet gave a near relative in marriage to a freed slave, he also, in conformance to the Sunnah, married his nearest relative, that is, a daughter, to a slave. Although he was himself a descendant of the Prophet , and Allah had given him a worldly position so high that he could marry his daughter to the caliph's son or could have taken a wife from wherever he liked.

Hazrat Usman Khairi

When the time of his death came near and the symptoms of death appeared, his son ripped his clothes. When he saw this, he said: "Son! This you are doing against the Sunnah and this is a sign of hypocrisy".

As the Holy Prophet has said, 'that whatever is present in the vessel, that only will drip from it?' Look, how enviable are the lives of these gentlemen that throughout their lives they managed to conform to the Sunnah. Even in the agony of death when a man is at his wit's end, let alone himself, he does not even like someone else to violate the Sunnah!

Bashar Bin Harith

It is reported from Bashar Bin Harith that he saw the Holy Prophet in a dream, who asked of him: "O Bashar! Do you know why Allah Most High hath given you superiority over your contemporaries"? He said: "0 Apostle of Allah! I do not know. The Holy Prophet said: "You have been exalted to the position of the Abrar a category of (saints) for your conforming to my sunnah, serving the pious, advising your brethren and for loving my Companions and my household".

Allamah Taimiah

Regarding his conformance to the Sunnah Maulana Ali Miah Nadvi (may his shadow never grow less!) writes in his 'Da'wat wa Azimat' that the beginning of his popularity and of being a Siddiq is in conformance to the sunnah and its end too is consummate conformance to the sunnah.

Even his opponents admit Ibn Taimiah's interest and engrossment in Hadith and Sunnah. But this interest and engrossment was not merely academic and theoretical; it was practical and external also. His contemporaries depose that the respect and reverence for the prophetic position and respect for conformance to the sunnah which they witnessed at Ibn Taimiah' s place was not seen at any other man's place.

Hafiz Siraj al-Din says on oath that, "By Allah! I have not seen any man who respects and reveres the Holy Prophet ﷺ and who is so fond of conforming to the Sunnah and helping his religion as Ibn Taimiah." Seeing such dominance and consistency, an observer could only say, "this is what you call conformance to Sunnah."

Allamah Madi al-Din al-Wassiti says, "in our time we found only Ibn Taimiah such a person that the light of Muhammad's ﷺ prophethood was conspicuous in his life and conformance to the Sunnah in his words and deeds. A Layman's feelings testified it to be a specimen of conformance and perfect following only.

Hazrat Shaikh Sharaf Al-Din Yahava Mivari

He died at the age of six score and one (61). On the day he expired, in spite of so much weakness and old age he took off his shirt and asked for water for ablution. He rolled up his sleeves and demanded the miswak and loudly uttering Bismillah started making ablution. At every part and every action he was reciting the usual invocations. He washed both the hands up to the elbows but committed a lapse in washing the face.

Shaikh Khalil reminded him. So he performed the ablution afresh. He was uttering the Tasmiah (Bismillah-hir-Rahman-nir-rahim) beginning in the name of Allah and the invocations in their proper sequence very carefully and the people who were present there were wondering that he was so careful even in such an old age.

Qazi Zahid, extending his hand, tried to help him in washing the right foot but he stopped him and performed the ablution with his own hands. Then he demanded the comb and combed the beard. Then he asked for the prayer-carpet and said two rak'ahs of (nafl) prayer.

Hazrat Junayd Baghdadi

When he was departing from this world an attendant was helping him perform ablution at the time of death. He forgot to make him scour the beard with his fingers. Hazrat Junayd caught his hand in order to make him perform the Sunnah. People said: "Hazrat, isn't such triviality overlooked at such a time'.'? He said, "We have reached Allah by the blessing of this (conformance to Sunnah) only."

Hazrat Imam Ahmed Ibn Hanbal

He died at the age of 77 years of which the last nine days passed in severe illness, so much so that be had begun urinating blood also. When the physician was asked about it, he said, 'Sorrow and worry have broken the abdomen into pieces.' One day he was very much indisposed. His disciple, Imam Merwazi says that on that day he assisted him to perform the ablution. "Even in that critical condition he instructed me to make him scrub the fingers."

These gentlemen had grasped Allah's Book and the Holy Prophet's ﷺ sunnah so firmly that the severest tyranny and oppression and the greatest devilish power could not budge them from their stand.

Accordingly, it is stated in, 'Tarikh-e D'awat wa 'Azimat,' that opposition to the question of the Quran's being created, defence of the correct belief and the responsibility of facing the contemporary government had to be borne alone by Imam Ahmed bin Hanbal who was then the Imam of the group of traditionalists and the trustee of the Sunnah and the Shari'ah (Amongst renovators sprung mischief that the Quran was part of creation, where as Imam Hambal insisted that the Quran is word of Allah. He refused to opine any further).

The intrepid Imam was brought from Riqqa to Baghdad. His feet were heavy with four fetters. For three days a polemical discussion was held with him on this question but he did not flinch from his doctrine. On the fourth he was taken to the governor of Baghdad. The governor said to him: "Ahmed! Is your own life so burdensome to you? The caliph will not kill you with his own sword but he has sworn an oath that if you did not accept his word you would be scourged again and again and you would be thrown at such a place where sun would never show itself" (solitary confinement).

Thereafter the Imam was brought before Caliph Mu'atasim and he was given 28 cuts of scourge for that denial and insistence of his. A fresh executioner used to lash only twice and then another executioner would be called. At every lash Imam Ahmed used to say, "Produce something from Allah's Book or the Apostle's ﷺ Sunnah so that I may admit it."

At one place the venerable Imam describes his condition as under: - “After nineteen lashes Mu'atasim himself came to me and said: ‘Ahmed! Why are you after your own life? By Allah! I have great regard for you.’ A man named Ajif was often prodding me with the handle of his sword and was saying, ‘You want to overcome all of them.’ Another would say, ‘Allah's slave! The caliph is standing near you.’ Someone would say, ‘0 Commander of the Faithful! You are observing a fast and yet you are standing in the sun.’ Then Mu'atasim would talk to me and I would give the same reply, ‘Produce something from Allah's Book or the Apostle's ﷺ Sunnah so that I may admit it.’”

Then the caliph would order the executioner to whip me with full force. Meanwhile I became unconscious. When I came to, I saw that the fetters had been removed. A man from amongst those who were present said, "We had felled you with your face downward and we trampled you".

Imam Ahmed says that I did not feel anything. The Muslims and non-Muslims of that time, hearing and seeing these particulars of the Imam's ordeal used to cry and Muslims and non-Muslims all invoked Allah for him and wept.

His disciples finding it unbearable, enquired, “Hazrat! Isn’t this the time to act upon the Quranic Instruction, ‘Whoever disbelieved in Allah after his belief, except him who is forced thereto and whose heart is at rest with Faith.”(XVI: 106)

May Allah fill the respectable Imam's grave with light and shower billions of mercies upon him that for the ummah, particularly for the leaders of the community and the divines of the ummah what an excellent lesson he has left! He said, “Previously there have been some people that a saw would be put on their heads and they would be sawn into two but they would not budge from their religion. This is not merely a personal matter of mine that there may be something in my heart and I may utter something else with my tongue. What will happen to the faith and belief of these millions of Muslims whose eyes are gazing at my lips? Hence at this time I am responsible for their belief also".

These gentlemen were more concerned about Islam and the protection of the Muslims' beliefs than about their own persons and for which they endured everything and sacrificing everything guarded the Quran and the Holy Apostle's ﷺ sunnah. May Allah give them on our behalf and on behalf of all the Muslims the best rewards! Ameen!

Qutub Al-Irshad Hazrat Gangohi

The fourth gathering (Graduation ceremony - similar to modern university degree award ceremony) of Darul-Uloom, Deoband, for conferring the turbans of proficiency was held A.H. 1301, and the turbans were conferred at his hands. One day, on this occasion, when he went most probably for the Asr prayer, the takbir had already been said. As such, after saying salaam, he was marked to be in a very distressed condition and he was saying: "Alas! I have missed the first takbir today after 22 years".

Hazrat Gangohi was also staunch in following the Sunnah. It is a prophetic method to emerge from the mosque, stepping left foot first - while always to wear anything beginning from the right, including shoes. Curious observers noticed this combination Sunnah performed by him in one go - Maulana stepped left foot out of the mosque on top of the left sandal and followed right step straight into right sandal. Allah the Praise worthy always inspires the willing. Self-denial and personal humility, a great teacher of his calibre leaves for every Muslim to ponder upon.

Once during an outdoor teaching session, a sudden burst of rain caused panic among the students to run for shelter. Everyone hurried indoors with books and tripods, while Maulana collected everybody's shoes. Most students were red faced and highly embarrassed. Some were even overcome emotionally. Maulana modestly remarked, "It says in the Hadith that, 'Ants in their holes and fishes in water pray for students, angels spread their wings under their feet.' Serving such people I have achieved good fortune, why do you deprive me of such felicity."

Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanautavi

As other elders had participated against the rule of colonialism in 1857 , Maulana Nanautavi too had personally taken part in the stuggles of Shamli and had also been wounded. When those of power in the Raj issued warrants of arrest for Maulana Haji Imdadullah, Maulana Nanautavi and Maulana Gangohi and rewards too were announced for arresting them, people started searching for them.

But since Allah Most High had endowed Maulana Nanautavi with perfect intrepidity, perseverance and courage, he used to go about publicly, unconcerned with all sorts of consequences. However, when relatives and sympathisers intensely insisted upon him to go into hiding in view of the critical nature of the time, he went into hiding for three days, but as soon as three days were over, he emerged from the hiding and began

to go here and there openly. When people again begged him earnestly to go underground, he said: "To go into hiding for more than three days is not proven from the sunnah, because the Holy Prophet too had remained hidden in the Cave of Thaur, at the time of migration, for three days only".

Hazrat Sa'eed Bin Musayyab

He is the famous glorious Follower (Tabi'i), and a very great conformer to the Sunnah. For 50 years he never missed a single congregational prayer; not even the First Takbir. And for 40 years there was given no prayer-call for any prayer before which he might not be present in the mosque; and for 50 years he said the pre-dawn prayer (Fair) with the ablution of the previous Isha prayer.

Maulana Muzaffar Husain Kandhlavi

As regards him it is stated in the book entitled Masha'ikh-e Kandhla that Maulana Mahmud Bakhsh left behind him a son named Maulana Muzaffar Husain who in asceticism and piety and conformance to the sunnah was a matchless person and a renowned august man.

It is stated further in the said book that Maulana Muzaffar Husain never deviated from obedience to Allah and conformance to the prophetic sunnah and used to arrange all his religious and secular affairs, and the external and internal tasks and problems in accordance with the Book and the Hadith. He always used to be active in discharging the people's rights and used to devote all his efforts and endeavours in reviving the prophetic Sunnah. He used to try not to do anything against Allah's and the Holy Apostle's a pleasure, nor take a single step contrary to the Sunnah.

His followers and proselytes have written about him that the process of allegiance and inculcation or initiation (taiqin) was also current at Maulana Muzaffar Husain's place and everywhere many people who became his proselytes (murid) used to become enamoured of the Book and the sunnah.

Hafiz Muhammad Yusuf and Hafiz Muhammad Yunus (Shaik al-Hadith Maulana Muhammad Zakariya's maternal grandfather) used to say that Maulana Muzaffar Husain's special miracle (karamah) and blessing was this that whoever became his proselyte, he then never missed the Tahajjud prayer.

Every proselyte of his who this insignificant author happened to meet, found them habitual of Tahajjud and other traditional nafl prayers. Illumination of faith beaconed visibly from their faces.

August Men's Statements Regarding Insistence On Conformance To The Sunnah

Imam Abu Hafs's Statement: -

"Do not reckon that man, who did not weigh his deeds and conditions with the Book and the Sunnah, and did not accuse his doubts in the book of humans".

Abu Sulaiman Darani's Statement: -

"Sometimes, a point from amongst the Sufis' points crosses my mind. It lies there for many days. I do not accept it until two just witnesses, that is, the Book and the Sunnah testify to it". (That is, I accept it then only).

Hazrat Adham Baikhi's Statement: -

Once the people asked Hazrat Adham Balkhi: "What is the reason that Allah Most High does not accept our invocations"?

"For this reason", he replied, "that you know Allah and also believe in Him but you do not obey Him. You recognise the Holy Apostle ﷺ but you do not follow him. You read the noble Quran but do not act according to it. You partake of Allah's bounties but you do not thank Him. You take Satan to be your enemy but you do not run away from him; on the contrary you befriend him. You know death to be true but you do not make any provision for the Hereafter; on the contrary you collect things of the world. You bury your relatives with your own hands and yet you do not take a lesson from this. You do not renounce your evil habits and yet find faults with others. How can then the invocation of such a man be accepted"?

Hazrat Ta' Ous's Statement: -

He mostly kept himself to the house. When he was asked the reason for this, he said, "I have adopted this loneliness due to the rulers' tyranny, the destruction of the subjects and the departure of the Sunnah. Because the people who may discriminate between slave and son in establishing the truth, they are tyrants".

The Ascetic Hatim's Statement: -

He says: "The man who claims four things without four qualities is a liar. The man who claimed love for his Master without piety and abstinence is a liar, and he who claimed love for Paradise without spending money is a liar; and he who claimed love

for the Holy Prophet ﷺ without conforming to his Sunnahs is a liar; and he who claimed love for progress in ranks without having love for the faqirs and the poor is a liar."

Shah Abd Al-Ghani Phulpuri's Statement: -

"Unveiling (kashf) and thaumaturgic gifts (karamah), spiritual state, ecstasy and dancing, absorption (istaghraq), flying in the air, walking on water, levitation, etc. have nothing to do with divine pleasure, because these matters are involuntary and man is not legally responsible (mukallaf) for involuntary matters. (Some may posses it - some may not).

Moreover, even anchorites and immoral and sinful pseudo-faqirs also achieve these qualities. It says in a Hadith that the tortures of the graves are sometimes unveiled to animals also. The common fly also flies in air; a straw also swims on water. What have these things to do with worship, and only that pattern of worship is approved which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught us.

To subject all movements and pauses, sentiments and states to the Holy Prophet's ﷺ footprint is called true submission and true worship, and this worship alone is approved worship.

Along with conformance to that sunnah if unveiling and thaumaturgic gifts, ecstasy and absorption, and states also are awarded to any one, they too are laudable due to the blessing of the conformance to the sunnah but they are not the objective. And if some one, even if in a single action, is committed to and slave of any custom and manner of his own invention and innovation rather than sunnah, then despite his qualities of unveiling and thaumaturgic gifts, dancing and absorption, he is unapprovable, because Allah Most Glorious says:

‘O Our Apostle! Tell the people: if you want to be liked and beloved by Allah Most High, follow me. Through the grace of following me Allah will make you His beloved, because the quality of my slavery and the style of my worship are dearer than and superior to the worship of all the creatures in the sight of Allah. So if you also walk in my footsteps, your worship and slavehood too, by the blessing of this conformance, will become, in the sight of Allah, dearer than and superior to the worship and slavehood of other ummahs.’ And you are the best of the ummahs for the reason that your apostle too is the leader of the apostles. In regard to the apostle's leadership his slaves too were given the honour of leadership.”

Persian couplet, ‘I am proud of it that I belong to your ummah; I am sinful yet I am lucky. ‘

Hazrat Ubay Bin K'ab's Statement: -

"To regard the divine path and the messenger's method as indispensable is incumbent on you, because the slave who maintained himself on the divine path and the messenger's sunnah, and then remembered the Beneficent Lord and due to His fear tears began to flow from his eyes, fire (of hell) will not be able to touch him. And the slave who maintained himself on the divine path and the sunnah method and remembered the Beneficent One, and tears began to flow from his eyes and due to Allah’s fear his body began to tremble, his example is like that tree whose leaves might have dried up, and then a gust of wind came and all its leaves were shed (i.e., like this all the sins of that man were pardoned). To worship moderately by being firm in the divine path and the Sunnah method is much better than striving too much (in matters) contrary to the divine path and the apostolic Sunnah. So have a look at your deeds, whether they are moderate or in excess, and whether they are in accordance with the prophets' method and Sunnah or not. And a statement of the Holy Prophet has been reported that the Israelites were divided into 71 sects, "And my ummah will be divided into 72 sects, out of which 71 sects will go to Hell and only one will go to Paradise". The Companions asked: "O Allah's Apostle! Which is that sect"? He said: ‘The Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Ja ma'ah.’”

It is also reported from the Holy Prophet that, "There is recompense of a hundred martyrs for one who sticks firmly to my Sunnahs during the corruption of my ummah".

Imam Awza`i’s Statement: -

He says: "Hold your heart to the Sunnah method. Stop where the Companions stopped, and speak where they spoke. Withhold yourself from things they withheld themselves, and in your religion walk on the pious predecessors' path, 'because where they benefited, you too will benefit, i.e. you will be given a place in Paradise along with them".

Besides this, he also said: "I saw the Lord of Honour (may His glory increase!) in a dream. He told me: "O Abd al-Rahman! You alone criticise for the right things in My path, and forbid bad things'. I said, '0 Lord! It fell to my lot through Your favour only'. And then I requested Him: '0 Lord! Give me death in Islam'. He said: 'Rather in Islam and on the Sunnah; i.e. long for dying in Islam and on the Sunnah, because I will give

you death in accordance with the approved religion and the Sunnah method of My Beloved Prophet .'"

Sufyan Thauri's Statement: -

He says, "No statement is correct unless it is accompanied by action. Then no statement and action are correct unless their ascription is correct; and no statement and action and ascription are correct as long as they are not in accordance with the Holy Prophet's sunnah method."

Once he said to Yusuf bin Sabat: "0 Yusuf! If you receive information that such and such a man on the eastern border is staunch in maintaining the sunnah, send him greetings, and if you receive the news that another man is firm in maintaining the sunnah on the extreme western border, send him salutations too, because very few Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah are left."

Moreover, once he said to his learned disciples (ulema): "Accept my advice regarding doing good to the Ahl-e sunnah, for these poor strangers are very few in number",

Junayd Baghdadi's Statement: -

He says: "All paths are closed for the people, save for that man who followed in the Holy Prophet's footsteps. So he who followed the Holy Prophet's Sunnah and regarded his method as indispensable, then all the paths of good deeds are open for him".

He also said: "The path for achieving proximity to Allah Most High is closed for the people, save for those believers who are followers of the Holy Prophet and subject to his Sunnah method. Accordingly, Allah Most High hath said: "Verily in the messenger of Allah ye have a good example." (XXXIII: 21)

This is also his saying: "This our cult of Tasawwuf is restrained by the Book and the Sunnah, and our knowledge is bound with the Book and the Sunnah. The man who does not remember the Book and does not transcribe Hadith and does not learn Fiqh Jurisprudence) shall not be followed"

Imam Shafi'i's Statement: -

"When I see a man who follows Hadith and Sunnah, it is as if I have seen one of the Holy Prophet's Companions".

Shaikh Sharfuddin Yahya Minyari's Statement: -

He writes in a letter that the divine statement "Say, (O Muhammad, to mankind): If ye love Allah, follow me; Allah will love you," (111:31) is supporting this meaning which a dear one has expressed. Masnavi: ‘He, as your guide, is sufficient: so seek not the path. He is sufficient as your tongue: so speak not nonsense. Whatever He said, consider it as an absolute speech; whatever he did, regard it true, he who is not like dust at His Door, dust be on his head! - even if he is an angel.’ (One who does not humble hiniself at his door is not worthy of any praise - disassociate with-him).

He writes further, "It is known from this that some incapable and useless men who, due to their vicious fancy, ignorance and lust, do not adopt the Holy Prophet's path, remain deprived of the fragrance of the meaning of this Hadith. To walk straight on the path is impossible without a guide. Hence it has been said: Masnavi: - ‘How can the blind ever manage to go straight? The blind man's going without a staff is an error. The path, O son, is long and full of calamities; the wayfarer, therefore, requires a guide.’

My Own Shaikh's Statement: -

He says: “The ulema have written different ways for the love of the Holy Prophet, “Qazi Iyaz says that, ‘the man who loves a thing gives it preference over all other things. This alone is the meaning of love; otherwise it is not love; it is merely a false claim of love. Hence the most momentous among all the signs of love for the Holy Prophet is that one may follow him and adopt his methods and follow his sayings and deeds and carry out his orders; and abstain from those things which he has prevented from, and in every circumstance, in joy and in sorrow and in straitened and in easy circumstances, tread according to his ways. The statement in the holy Quran is, ‘Say (0 Muhammad, to mankind): If ye love Allah, follow me; Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.’” (111: 31)

Moreover the Shaikh said: "In short, prosperity and betterment for the Muslims depends only on conforming to the religion, on the Apostle's example and the pious predecessors' ways. This alone will prove useful in the Hereafter and this alone is the cause of advancement in the world. Acting upon this, only the former people had reached the apex of progress; their conditions and particulars are before our eyes and no one knowing history can deny this thing. In things contrary to this there is destruction for the Muslims; there is ruin, there is loss in the Hereafter and loss in the world".

Sayyidena Shaikh Abd Al-Qadir Jilani's Statement: -

He said, "Gentlemen! Correct your affiliation with the Holy Prophet ﷺ. For whoever’s conformance to him becomes right, his affiliation too becomes right. And without conforming your saying, that you are one of his ummah, is not beneficial for you. When you become his follower in all his sayings and deeds, you will have the good fortune of being his companion on the Day of Judgement. Have you not heard the Most Glorious Allah's statement that, 'whatever the messenger giveth you, take it; and whatsoever he forbiddeth, abstain (from it).’ (LIX:7) So carry out whatever he orders you and abstain from whatever he forbids you. Surely you will become proximate to Allah in the world, with regard to your hearts, and will be near to Him in the Hereafter, with regard to your bodies and persons.”

Hazrat Umar Bin Abdul Aziz's Statement:

He said: "To adopt carefully the ways of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and after him his successors, is to confirm in Allah's Book and to obey Him; and this is the power of religion. Neither has anyone the right to change them nor to amend them nor is anyone's opposing opinion worthy of consideration. Whoever follows them is a guided person and whoever acquires help from these things is successful. Whoever does contrary to them and adopts a path other than that of the believers; Allah Most Glorious will not let him act on his adopted path and will throw him into Hell which is a very bad abode!'

Shaikh Abul Hasan Khirqani: -

He says: "The Holy Prophet's ﷺ heir is the one who follows him and not one who merely blackens paper." (Writes volumes).

Khwaja Nizamuddin Awlia: -

He says, "There ought to be firmness and steadiness in following and conforming to the Holy Prophet ﷺ; and let no praiseworthy act (mustahab) and good manner (adab) be missed".

Hazrat Hasan Bin Ali's Statement: -

He says that no statement is correct without action, and no statement and action are correct without the right intention and no statement and action and intention are correct without accordance to the Sunnah.

Ayyub Sakhtiani's Statement: -

He says: "Whenever I hear news of the death of anyone who practised the prophetic method, I feel by his passing away as if a part of my body has gone away. And one of the symptoms of the good luck of Arabia and non-Arabia is this that Allah Most High may create there a religious divine who may be committed to the Sunnah".

Abdullah Bin Shauzab's Statement: -

He says: "When a young man is inclined towards Allah, it will be great bounty upon him that Allah may acquaint him with virtuous and stable people in the path of sunnah so that young soul may be raised in the traditions of sunnah.

Mu'ammir Bin Sulaiman Taimi's Statement: -

He says, "I went to the presence of my father. I was disconsolate at the time. He asked me, 'How are you feeling?' I replied that a friend of mine had died. He asked me, 'Did he die on the way of the Sunnah?' I said yes. He said, 'Then don't grieve.'"

Abdullah Bin Muhriz's Statement: -

He stated, "Religion will depart as the Sunnahs go into disuse one by one, as the rope is broken when all its twists are open."

Mujaddid Alf-E Sani's Statement: -

He says, "Merit and recompense depend upon conforming to the Sunnah and excess of reward and recompense on executing the Shari'ah. For example, the siesta, which may be according to the Sunnah and with the intention of conforming to the Sunnah, is superior to billions of vigils that may not be in accordance with the Sunnah. Similarly, not to fast on the day of Id al-Fitr - which has been ordered by the Shari'ah - is superior to continuous fasting that may be contrary to the Shari'ah. To give a farthing in charity in pursuance of the Legislator's ﷺ order is superior to spending a mountain of gold by one's own desire."

In another letter he says that, "The spending of a single dirham (silver coin), by way of zakat, which has been ordered by the Shari'ah, is better and more useful for self-violence (Infliction of wound on one self for better of soul like inesiverness of a surgeon) than the spending of thousands of dinars (gold coins) through one's own desire. To eat on the day of Id-al-Fitr in accordance with the order of Shari'ah, is better rather than fasting for years for suppressing desires on oneself. And to say the two rak'ahs of Fajr prayer with the congregation, which is one of the Sunnahs, is much better than one's saying supererogatory (nafl) prayers throughout the night and say the Fajr prayer alone without the congregation."

Imam Razi's Statement (Tafsir-e Kabir, Vol.8, and P.243)

"Action, which is pure but not correct is not acceptable, and action which is correct but is not pure is also not acceptable. Only that action is accepted which may be pure as well as right. A pure action is that which may be done for Allah and the correct one is that which may be in accordance with the sunnah."

Imam Ghazali's Statement: -

He says: "Whichever deed you do without the Holy Prophet's ﷺ instruction, even though it may be in the form of devotions, it is not a devotion but is a sin." (Maktub 7)

Maulana Shah Wasiullah's Statement: -

"I have acknowledged it a long time ago, and I am observing it with mine own eyes, that in this period there are no means of acquiring prosperity in religion as well as in the world except regulating life according to the Sunnah. That is, we can achieve worldly prosperity also today by adopting and acting upon the Holy Prophet's ﷺ Sunnah; otherwise the door of prosperity has been closed and welfare has become scarce for the people of the world and will continue to become still more scarce".

Then he says: "The truth is that the divine principle for world-prosperity and the string of the prophetic method for world-peace have slipped off our hands, and that string was only this that, besides religion, the Holy Prophet's ﷺ sunnah should have been adopted in worldly matters too."

Khwaja Muhammad Ma'soom Sirhindi's Statement (Letters 10 & 22): -

He writes in one of his letters, "The happiness of both the worlds depends upon conforming to the Sovereign of the Two Worlds ﷺ. Absolution from Hell and entry into Paradise depends upon obedience to the Chief of the Saints and the Leader of the Prophets ﷺ. Similarly, Allah's pleasure is contingent upon following the Chosen Apostle ﷺ. Repentance (tawbah), asceticism and piety, trust in Allah (tawakkul) and retiring from the world (tabattul) are not accepted without the Holy Prophet's ﷺ method. And remembrance (zikr), reflection (fikr), relish (zauq) and 'longing' (shauq) are unreliable without having connection with the Holy Prophet ﷺ. In another letter he writes, "To walk on the straight path without the light of the prophetic sunnah is difficult and the acquiring of salvation without adopting the prophetic path is a mere fancy".

Sahl Bin Abdullah Tastari's Statement: -

He said: "The money that is taken from the sinful people (Sinful people here meaning professional gamblers, singers, and visionaries. Donations from them is not accepted) is unlawful (haram). And the example of Sunnah in the world is like that of paradise in the Hereafter. He who went to Paradise became secure from calamity, and, similarly, one who may be on the path of the Sunnah is secure from lust and innovation. "And the man who taunts at earning (Earning: here means a profession, certain professions like sweepers, weavers, or cobblers were looked upon as very low and pointed at), in fact taunts at the Sunnah, and he who taunts at the trust in Allah, taunts at faith (iman), and the earning of the men trusting in Allah can only be correct if on the prophetic path".

Imam Zuhri's Statement: -

He is one of the great ulema and is a famous Tabi'i (Follower). He says: "I have heard it from the ulema preceding me, i.e., from the noble Companions that absolution lies in firmly grasping the Holy Prophet's ﷺ Sunnah. And knowledge will soon vanish. The stability of the religion and the world consists in knowledge, and in the passing away of knowledge lies the destruction of all."

Hazrat Ma' ruf Karkhi's Statement: -

He says: "The seeking of Paradise without action is a sin, and waiting for intercession without observing sunnah is a self-deception of sorts, and to hope for divine mercy in disobedience is sheer ignorance and foolishness".

Abdullah Dailami's Statement: -

He is a great Tabi'i; some have called him a Companion also. He says: "This has come tome from the elders, that the beginning of the end of religion will start with the ommission of Sunnahs (one by one). Each Sunnah will be omitted as if the twists of a rope are unwound".

Criterion of Saintliness

The definition of a 'Man of Allah' as given in the '*Sharh-e 'Aqa'id-e Nasafi*' is as follows: -

"A saint is a man who knows Allah's Person and attributes to his best ability, and is constant in devotions and refrains from sins and does not indulge in sensual pleasures and lusts."

The Identity of a 'Man of Allah'

My chief and master, Shaikh al-Hadith Maulana Muhammad Zakariya (may his shadow never grow less!) states that it is very important to ascertain what kind of people the 'Men of Allah' are.

The identity of the 'Men of Allah' consists in conformance to the Sunnah, for Allah Most Glorious and Holy, has sent His Most Beloved Prophet ﷺ as an example for the guidance of the ummah, and has stated in the holy Quran: -

"Say, (O Muhammad, to mankind) if ye love Allah, follow me; Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. Say, Obey Allah and the messenger. But if they turn away, lo! Allah loveth not the disbelievers (in His guidance)." (III: 31-32)

Hence, the man who is a consummate follower of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is in reality the true man of Allah; and the farther a man is from conformance to the sunnah the farther he is from Allah's proximity. The professional commentators of the Quran (mufassarin) have stated that the man who claims to cherish love for Allah but opposes the Holy Prophet's ﷺ Sunnah is a liar.

For it is a rule of affection and a law of love that when a man loves someone, he loves the beloved's house and its doors and walls and courtyard and garden also; so much so that even the beloved's dog and donkey are loved. An Arabic poet says: - "When I pass through Layla's city. I kiss this wall and that wall. The love of cities has not infatuated my heart; it's rather the power of the love of those people who inhabit these cities".

Another Arabic poet says: -"You claim love for Allah and yet you disobey Him. Had you been true in your claim, you would never have disobeyed Him, because the lover is always obedient to the beloved".

The Holy Prophet said, “My entire ummah will enter Paradise save those who denied.” The Companions asked: "What's the meaning of ‘those who denied.’ He replied: "The man who obeys me will enter Paradise and he who disobeys me is the denier.”

At another place he says: "None from amongst you can be a Muslim as long as his desire does not become subject to the religion that I have brought".

It is really astonishing that claimants for the welfare of Islam and the Muslims are devoid of obedience to Allah and His Apostle . To say anything before these claimants, that it is contrary to the Sunnah and which is opposed to the Holy Prophet's way is tantamount to striking them with a spear! Shaikh Sa'di says: - "He who chose a way contrary to the Prophet's would never reach the destination".

In short, to ascertain that this man is one of the ‘Men of Allah’, to cultivate friendship with him, to attend upon him frequently and to benefit from his knowledge, is the cause of progress in religion, and the Holy Prophet's order too is the same.

Imam Abu Hafs Kabir Hadad's Statement

"He who did not weigh his sayings, states and actions in the balance of Allah's Book and the Sunnah, and did not consider his sensual desires bad, do not reckon him to be in the list of men".

Hazrat Junayd Bagdadi's Statement

"The routes for reaching Allah are countless but all of them are closed for the creature, except for that man who follows the Apostle's footsteps.”

In another statement Hazat Junayd Baghdadi says that, "This, our cult of Tasawwuf, is cordoned with the Book and the Sunnah and principle". He also said: "Our knowledge is bound with the Book and the Sunnah. The man who does not remember the Book and does not transcribe Hadith and does not learn Fiqh shall not be followed".

Moreover he says: "Our Book the Holy Quran is the Chief of all Books and is the most comprehensive Book. And our Shari'ah is clearer and more apt to human nature than all other shari'ahs. And the Sufis', method has been strengthened with the Book and the Sunnah. He who read the Quran but did not commit Hadith to memory and did not understand the meanings and significance of both, is not at all deserved to be followed.”

"If you see a man, that he is sitting cross-legged in the air, even then don't follow him as long as you do not see his behaviour as regards Allah and His prohibitive orders".

Qutb Al-Irshad Maulana Gangohi's Statement

He says in Irshad al-Muluk that a spiritual director should be that person who may instil and indurate religion and Shari'ah in the proselytes' hearts, and it is not possible to become a Shaikh without this quality.

He writes further that the qualifications that should necessarily be found in the Shaikh are as follows:- ‘He should be a scholar of the Quran and the Hadith; and not only a scholar but should also possess qualities of perfection and should be averse to the love of the world, position and wealth. He should have acquired the knowledge of the path from such godly Shaikhs whose chain of affiliation may link uninterruptedly to the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

In his ‘Fatawa Rasheediah’ he writes at one place that the man who is a Sufi but acts contrary to the Shari'ah is not worthy of being paid allegiance (bai`ah); nor is he a man of the path; on the contrary, he is a Satan. Persian couplet: - "He who chose a path contrary to the Prophet's ﷺ would never reach the destination".

Maulana Khalil Ahmed Muhajir-E Madani's Statement

He writes in his Book ‘Itmam al-Na 'am,’ it is not necessary that if, the peculiarity of someone, is proven with thaumaturgic gifts and miracles, that he may also be free from the calamities of the baser self. Sometimes, someone who is not perfectly steady in faith and conformance to the Shari achieves external miracles.

Commenting upon this observation Maulana Abdullah Gangohi says that the common people believe much in miracles and unusual things; whoever performs any new or novel thing, they consider him a saint. Rather the very criterion of sainthood in the sight of the masses is also same, although the real miraculousness is stability in following the Shari' ah and the cleansing of the self from evil habits.

The Shaikh demolishes this error. It is not necessary that a thaumaturgist may also have gained release from the calamities of the self, i.e. the internal diseases and mean habits. Because sometimes thaumaturgic gifts are received by some one who is not fully stable in faith and conformance to the Shari'ah and his baser self is not pure. On the contrary, non-Muslims perform abnormal or preternatural actions also. Hence such abnormal and thaumaturgic acts are not things to be relied upon; the real thing is stability in religion and the cleansing and purification of the baser self.

Maulana Wasiullah's Statement

He says: "It has also been described as a saint's attribute that he may be assiduous in performing the devotions. But this has become the people's criterion today that even if a man is not regular in performing the obligatory and incumbent acts, he can be a saint. According to them, opposition to the shari'ah is not antithetical to sainthood; they suppose a stark naked person also to be a divinely approved person. I ask you: What is it, if it is not flagrant perversity? Shaikh Sa'di says: - "Don't think, O Sa'di, that the path of purity can be trodden save in the footsteps of the Chosen One".

Imam Rabbani Mujaddid Alf-E Sani's Statement

"O son! The thing that will be useful tomorrow, on the Day of Judgement, is conformance to and compliance with the Lawgiver ﷺ.

Dervish-like conditions, scholarly rapture, sciences and educational acquirements, sufistic mysteries and allusions are undoubtedly very good if they be along with compliance with and conformance to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. But if these things be without the commitment to the Shariah and the essence of conformance to the Sunnah, then there is no substance in them save degeneration and istadraj (working of abnormal feats the effect of which is ephemeral)".

In another letter he says: "If these states and particulars are achieved along with the opposition to the Shari'ah, even though it be to the extent of a hair's breadth, they will all be counted as istadraj and will at the least defame him."

"Absolution without following the Beloved Prophet ﷺ of the Lord of the Worlds is impossible".

Mufti Sayyid Abdur Rahim Lajpuri's Statement

He writes in his Fatawa Rahimiyyah as follows: -

"It should also be remembered that generally perceptible miracles alone are considered a perfection, but according to men of perfection the spiritual miraculousness is a perfection. That is, to remain firm on the Chosen Prophet's ﷺ Shari'ah, in such a way that in every walk of life and on every occasion one may discriminate between Sunnah and non-Sunnah acts. And to conform consummately to the Apostolic Sunnah; and to have the zest for it and attachment to it and heartfelt concentration towards Allah and engrossment with Allah should be to such an extent that not a single breath be passed in forgetfulness.

"A chishti saint came to the presence of Mahboob-e Subhani Mujaddid Alf-e Sani and said": 'I was feeling 'contraction' (qabz) with regard to Allah for a number of years. So I went to your Hazrat Khwaja Baqi Billah and complained to him of contraction. By Khwaja Sahib's spiritual concentration (tawajjuh) and invocation, my state of contraction changed. Could you please also shower your tawajjuh upon me because Hazrat Khwaja Sahib has entrusted all his successors (khulafa) and proselytes to you'. Hazrat Mujaddid Sahib replied: "With me there is nothing except conformance to the sunnah."

"Hearing this the saint was enraptured and due to the effect of the power of affiliation (nisbat) and the internal power, the land of Sirhind began to shake. "Hazrat Imam Rabbani asked an attendant to bring his miswak from the niche. He threw the miswak on the ground whereby the land became still instantaneously, and that saint's rapturous state also fled.

"After that he told the saint, 'By your miraculous power the land of Sirhind began to shake, and if this faqir invokes, Allah willing, the deceased people of Sirhind will come to life. But I consider the using of miswak (Miswak: Piece of tree branch used as tooth brush) according to the Sunnah practice, during ablution-making, far superior then your miracle (shaking of the land) and mine (revival of the dead of Sirhind through my invocation."

Hazrat Ba-Yazid Bistami's Statement

He says: ‘If there is such a man of perfection in your sight who sits cross-legged in the air and levitates on water, don't hold him in esteem unless you test him as to how he is in observing the Islamic commandments and the legal limits (hudud).

Once he (Ba-Yazid Bistami) was told: ‘Such and such a man reaches Mecca in one night.’ ‘Satan,’ he replied, ‘Reaches from east to west in a moment, although he is held in Allah's curse.’ (Basa’ir al-Aha'ir, p.612)

Once he told an attendant: "Come along with me so that we may see such and such a man who has publicised himself with the claim of sainthood". There was in those days a man who was very famous among the people for his asceticism and abstinence. The attendant reports: "We went to him. When he came out, he spat in the direction of the

Qiblah, so Hazrat Ba-Yazid Bistami returned and did not even salute him, and said: "When this man is not secure in the Holy Prophet's Sunnahs and manners, how can he be secure in those miracles which he claims."

And he said: 'If you see that a man has been given miraculous gifts, so much so that he flies in the air, even then don't be deceived by him unless you see how he is in observing the affirmative dictates and in withholding himself from the negative orders and in guarding the divine limits'.

'O wise seeker of Truth! See that all these great Shaikhs and top-most experts of the Path revere the holy Shari'ah and base their esoteric sciences on Ahmed's ( ) character and the Hanafite millat (Most Muslims from the Indo-Pak subcontinent base there religious belief on religious laws devised by Imam Abu Hanifa, hence the label 'Hanafi' or 'Hanafite'). This, is so that the darkness of the perverts of the world and the outward appearance of the corrupt mischievous, erring and misleading people may not involve you in deception; they are walking crookedly from the right path and they have deviated from the straight road. These so called 'ulema' have gone out of the circle of the Shari'ah.

(Hearing Hazrat Ba-Yazid's talk) all the audience said, "May there be total and complete ruin for those people and for those who follow them, and also for those who regard their path to be good. For it is these people who prevent other people from walking on the right path, and they mix up falsehood with truth and knowingly hide the truth"

Khwaja Nizamuddin Awlia's Statement

He states in his Fatawa that a spiritual director should be such a man who possesses minute knowledge of the Shari'ah Tariqah (Path) and the Reality; when he is such, he will not bid for any work contrary to the Shari'ah.

Maulana Abdul-Hayy Lakhnavi's Statement

He says: The success of all religious and worldly works depends only on conforming to the Holy Prophet's ﷺ Shari'ah, and the man who has deviated from the path of the Shari'ah can neither be a saint nor the Ghaus (high-ranking saint) of the time.

And the man who says: "We are possessors of the hidden knowledge and we don't need external devotions, so, to believe such a man to be a perfect saint and to become his proselyte despite the absence of all the requisite qualifications is not proper."

Khwaja Ma'soom Sirhindi's Statement

He writes in a letter: Believe salvation to consist in conforming to the Sunnah and in refraining from innovation. Do not associate with the innovators and the atheists, for these people are the thieves of religion. Do not let a Faqih (Jurisprudent) who does not maintain the legal style and is not decorated with the prophetic Sunnah come to your majlis.

The sum and substance of this writing is that you fully act upon the following divine statement: -

"And whatever the messenger giveth you, take it. And - whatsoever he forbiddeth, abstain (from it). And keep your duty to Allah." (LIX: 7)

In another letter he writes, 'Strive in conforming to the Sunnah. Keep away from innovation and the innovators. Be inclined to the company of the ulema, faqirs and the precisians. Wherever you see anything contrary to the Shari'ah, avoid it and be away from that place. Persian couplet: - 'Associate with the lovers and choose all lovers. Don't ever be near one who is not a lover.'

And a true lover is he who is firm in conforming to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The same reality is being expressed from "Say (0 Muhammad, to mankind): If ye love Allah, follow me; Allah will love you"

In another letter he has written, 'O brother! Abstain from the company of the heterogeneous and the opponent of the path, and run away from the innovator's majlis.

It is a saying of Yahya bin Ma'az Razi (may his secret be sanctified!) that one should abstain from these three kinds:-
(1) The forgetful ulema, (2) The hypocritical readers (qurra) of the Quran, and (3) illiterate Sufis.

Be warned, that you should stay away from the man who is sitting on the spiritual director's masnad (seat), and his actions are not in accordance with the Holy

Prophet's ﷺ sunnah and nor is he decorated with the ornaments of the Shari'ah, him. Rather (as a precaution), don't even live in the same city where such an impostor lives. Lest after some time your heart should incline towards him and the establishment of spiritualism may be disturbed. Such a man is never worthy of power, for he is in reality a hidden thief. Although you may witness different types of abnormal acts and habits in him and may find him apparently unconnected with the world, (never get inclined towards him and) run away from him as one runs away from a lion.

The leader of the group (Sayyid al-Ta'ifa) Junayd Baghdadi (may his secret be sanctified!) says that all roads of success are closed, save the way of that man who follows in the Holy Prophet's ﷺ footsteps.

It is also the Sayyid al-Ta'ifa's saying that the path of the proximate, truthful ones is in reality connected with the Book and the Sunnah, and those ulema who are active on the Shari'ah and the Tariqah, they are the ulema who deserve to be called the Prophet's heirs. In their words, appearence and practice, they are the Holy Prophets ﷺ followers.

I state again that you should never, never consider that man a Gnostic who does not care for the prophetic manners and who renounces the Chosen Prophet's ﷺ practices. Don't ever be enamoured and infatuated by his (outward) retiring from the world, renunciation, thaumaturgic acts and habits, asceticism and reliance on Allah and (oral) unitary points of wisdom.

The pivot of the affair lies in conformance to the Shari'ah, and the matter of salvation is connected with following in the Holy Prophet's ﷺ footsteps. The discriminative thing between a verifier of truth and a sophist (or humbug) is conformance to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Asceticism and trust in Allah and retiring from the world without conformance to the Apostle are unreliable; remembrances and reflections, curiosities (ashwaq) and longings (azwaq) are useless things without the Holy Prophet's ﷺ connection.

Thaumaturgic acts and habits depend upon starvation and striving with the unregenerate self. What has it to do with gnosis?

Hazrat Abdullah ibn Mubarak has said that he who showed laziness in the civil mores (adaab), was deprived of the sunnah practices, and he who neglected the Sunnah practices was deprived of the obligatory acts, (Faraiz) and he who despised the obligatory duties, was deprived of gnosis.

People told Shaikh Abul Khayr that such and such a man levitated on water. He retorted, "Yes, a straw also levitates on water" (i.e. it is not something to be proud of). Then it was said: "Such and such a man flies in the air". He retorted, '(Well) the fly and the kite also fly in the air.' Then it was said: 'Such and such a man goes from one city to another in a moment.' He said: '(What's there in it?) Satan reaches west from the East in a jiffy. There's no value of such things. A man of Allah is in fact he who may associate with the people, may have wife and children and yet may not be forgetful about Allah (may He be more honoured and glorified!) even for a moment!'

Shaikh Ali bin Abi Bakr (may his secret be sanctified!) has said in Ma'arijul-Hedayah that the beauty and perfection of every person, in all matters, apparently, internally, essentially, subordinately, intellectually, practically, habitually and devotionally, lie hidden in consummate conformance to the Apostle.

The Consequence, In the World and The Hereafter, Of scorning and ridiculing The Sunnah

From the time the Muslims relinquished the Holy Prophet's ﷺ path and renounced his ways, and in it's place approved, adopted and owned the ways of Allah's and His Apostle's enemies, many qualities and characteristics of Allah's deniers (the infidels, polytheists, Jews and Christians) have been created in this ummah and by the claimants of Islam; qualities which are inconceivable in the presence of Islam.

One of these is the disease of ridiculing the Sunnah and scorning the religion which is growing day by day. The causes of it are different. Sometimes, due to arrogance, a religious thing or a prophetic Sunnah is considered mean and puerile and it is scorned and made fun of; make note that this is a form of infidelity.

By this dishonourable act, man washes his hands clean of his faith (iman). When the author of 'Al-Fatawa al-Hadithia' was asked if there was scope for any man who denied invoking the words 'O Allah! Make me one of those people who will receive Muhammed's ﷺ intercession.' He replied, 'This can be refused only by that man who may deny Allah and His Apostle ﷺ and the disease of arrogance may have overcome his heart, so much so that ostracising him from the pale of Islam (his arrogance) may push him to real infidelity!'

Our noble Imams have stated explicitly that if a man is asked to pare his nails (for it is a prophetic Sunnah) but he, with the idea of avoiding the Sunnah, says that he will not

do so, then he is an infidel. When the noble Imams' ruling is such, what will be the fixed abode of such a man who refuses to be one of these persons for whom intercession will be made? For the Holy Prophet's intercession is not reserved for the sinners only; on the contrary, intercession will be of seven kinds, so much so that even those seventy thousand people whose entry into Paradise without rendering any account will need the Holy Prophet's help and intercession.

Scorning the Men of Faith Was the Pastime of Meccan Polytheists

Thus from amongst the Meccan infidels those who were refractory and had a dominating penchant for scoffing and scorning and had made it routine to make fun of the Muslims (i.e. it was their regular pastime and an important means of amusement and recreation); such polytheists remained deprived of the bounty of Islam.

Habshi, the murderer of the Holy Prophet's revered uncle, Hazrat Hamza, received guidance; the woman Hinda, who had chewed upon Hazrat Hamza's liver, is awarded the wealth of Islam by Allah Most High. But those who jeered at Islam were not given guidance. On the contrary, on the fields of Badr and Uhad they were dispatched to Hell at the hands of the Muslims. A divine statement in the holy Quran is as such: -

"And when those who disbelieve behold thee, they but choose thee out for mockery, (saying): Is this who maketh mention of your gods? And they would deny all mention of the Beneficent. Man is made of haste. I shall show you My Aayat (torments, proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.), but ask Me not to hasten (them). And they say, 'When will this promise (be fulfilled), if ye are truthful?' If only those who disbelieved but knew the time when they will not be able to drive off the fire from their faces and from their backs, and they will not be helped! Nay, but it will come upon them unawares so that it will stupefy them, and they will be unable to repel it, neither will they be reprieved. Messengers before thee, indeed, were mocked, but that whereat they mocked surrounded those who scoffed at them." (XXI: 34-41).

Allamah lbn Kathir says that it is a divine habit to give rope to tyrants (i.e., the mills of God grind slowly), but when He ropes them in He does not loosen His clutches. Hence it was said: 'I am going to show My portent as to what severe punishments are to be inflicted on the transgressors and how those who mock at My prophet are flayed

alive. You will see this shortly. Don't make haste. At our place there is deferment but no unfairness, respite but no oversight'.

Since they considered the coming of the divine punishment and the Day of Doom to be impossible, boldly they used to say, 'Just tell us when these threats will be fulfilled'.

They are answered: 'If you were sensible people and if you but knew the dreadfulness of that day, you would not have made haste. On that day torture will be your covering and bedding from above and below. You will not have the power to repel it from your front and rear. There will be a dress of sulphur, set on fire, and you will be ablaze standing, and Hell will be surrounding you on all sides. There will be none to rise up to help you. Then Hell will suddenly pounce upon you and you will be left flabbergasted, nonplussed, fainting. You will be confounded and at a loss to have a stratagem so that you may repel it and save yourself from it, nor will an hour's time and respite be given.'

An Important Peculiarity of the Hypocrites

To mock and ridicule religion and the religionists is one of the peculiarities of the infidels, polytheists and hypocrites. At one place in the holy Quran, Allah Most High says about the Hypocrites:

"And when they fall in with those who believe, they say, 'We believe'; but when they go apart to their devils they declare: 'Lo! We are with you; verily we did but mock.' Allah (Himself) doth mock them, leaving them to wander blindly on in their contumacy" (II: 14-15).

Similarly, when the Prophet Noah + was preparing the boat, the infidels, while passing by him, used to poke fun at him which Allah Most High has described thus:-

"And he was building the ship, and every time that chieftains of his people passed by him, they made mock of him. He said: 'Though ye make mock of us, yet we mock at you likewise for your mocking.'" (XI: 38)

Then what eventually became those mockers is not hidden from any one i.e. the whole community was drowned in divine scourge.

Similarly, when the Meccan infidels began to scorn the Holy Prophet ﷺ and laugh at the religion brought by him and scorn at his sayings and actions, the One and Partnerless Allah, consoling him, said: -

"Messengers before thee, indeed, were mocked, but that (torture) whereat they mocked. surrounded those who scoffed at them". (XXI: 41)

The Provision for Ruin

In the verses XXI: 34-41 (quoted in the previous page – 'Scorning the Men of Faith Was the Pastime of Meccan Polytheists') the Holy Prophet has been consoled that he should not be distracted by the infidels' scoffing, for they were preparing for their own destruction, kindling fire for singeing and burning themselves, inflaming it further by making fun of him. A time would come when that blazing fire would seize them and then they would know what they had done. The divine statement at another place is: -

"Alas, the anguish for mankind! Never came there unto them a messenger but they did mock him." (XXXVI: 30)

Thus, it is a pity for the bondmen, tomorrow they will be repentant upon themselves, and expressing regret for what evil they did to themselves. Seeing the torture of the Day of Judgement they will rue their hands as to why they falsified the prophets and why they insulted and showed audacity to them to their hearts' content.

Had they pondered, they would have realised that the people before them who did not believe in the prophets were destroyed so thoroughly that not one of them remained alive. Those who sneer and jeer at Muslims will know their end on reaching Hell. As such, having reached Hell they will say: -

"And they say: What aileth us that we behold not men whom we were wont to count among the wicked? Did we take them (wrongly) for a laughing stock, or have our eyes missed them?"(XXXVIII: 63-64)

Hazrat Mujahid says that Abu Jahl will say, 'Where are Bilal, Ammar, Suhayb, etc.? They are not to be seen here'. In short, every infidel will say the same that, "the people whom we classed among the wicked are not to be seen here today. Was it our mistake that we thought nothing of them in the world and made fun of them? But perhaps our dealing like this with them was correct. They too must be in the Hell but they are perhaps on some such side that they are not visible to us!' Meanwhile will come a voice from the occupants of Paradise to the effect, "O denizens of Hell! Look here! We have found our Lord's promise. Now say about yourselves. Did Allah's promises prove right"? They will reply,'Yes, absolutely right.' Just then an announcer will say loudly: "Allah's curses be upon the oppressors"!

At another place Allah Most High says: -

"And as for those who disbelieved (it will be said unto them): Were not Our revelations recited unto you? But ye were scornful and became a guilty folk. And when it was said: Lo! Allah's promise is the truth, and there is no doubt of the Hour's coming, ye said, We know not what the Hour is. We deem it naught but a conjecture, and we are by no means convinced. And the evils of what they did will appear unto them, and that which they used to deride will befall them. And it will be said: This day we forget you, even as ye forgot the meeting of this your day; and your habitation is the Fire, and there is none to help you. This, for as much as ye made the revelations of Allah a jest, and the life of the world beguiled you. Therefore this day they come not forth from thence, nor can they make amends. Then praise be to Allah, Lord of the heavens and Lord of the earth, the Lord of the Worlds. And unto Him (alone) belongeth majesty in the heavens and the earth, and He is the Mighty, the Wise". (XLV: 31-37)

The divine statement in the holy Quran concerning the prevention of jesting and jeering of the people is: -

"0 ye who believe! Let not a folk deride a folk who may be better than they (are), nor let women (deride) women who may be better than they are; neither defame one another, nor insult one another by nicknames. Bad is the name of lewdness after faith. And whoso turneth not in repentance, such are evil-doers" (XLIX: 11)

In fact man jests and jeers at another man due to pride and thinking himself better and superior. Hence Allah Most High hath clearly stated: ‘How do you know who is better in Allah's sight? It is just possible that the person whom you are deriding and jeering may be better than you in Allah's sight".

When in this noble verse the holy Quran has given the positive ruling that those who commit absolute derision and jeering are oppressors, if the learned ulema then issue an anathematising fatwa for those who sneer at and ridicule religion, religiosity and the sunnah, it is absolutely correct. In fact in the Quran itself they have been called infidels. As such, the divine statement regarding the scoffers is: -

"And forsake those who take their religion for a pastime and a jest, and whom the life of the world beguileth. Remind (mankind) hereby lest a soul be destroyed by what it earneth. It hath beside Allah no friend nor intercessor, and though it offer every compensation it will not be accepted from it. Those are they who perish by their own deserts. For them is drink of boiling water and a painful doom, because they disbelieved." (VI: 70)

In this noble verse the infidels' action, that is, their treatment of religion as a thing of sport and a jest has been declared to be infidelity (kufr).

There is Divine Order for Terminating Relations with Them

Some of our friends often ask us about associating and maintaining relations with such people, saying that such and such a man keeps expressing different kinds of doubts and objections against Islam, Islamic commandments, Islamic methods and the Sunnahs, and making jest of religious things. They sat that this is likely to have an adverse effect on our children's minds and so what should we do, should we or should we not keep relations with them?

The answer to such queries is contained in Surah VI, verse 70:

"And forsake those who take their religion for a pastime and a jest, and whom the life of the world beguileth. Remind (mankind) hereby lest a soul be destroyed by what it earneth. It hath beside Allah no friend nor intercessor, and though it offer every compensation it will not be accepted from it. Those are they who perish by their own deserts. For them is drink of boiling water and a painful doom, because they disbelieved."

One should keep aloof from such a man so that his company and his talk may not affect one’s mind. And to discharge one's obligation one should keep advising such men with Quranic warnings so that they might be saved from divine punishment.

Mua'mmir reports that, “Ta'ous was once sitting and his son was also sat near him. Meanwhile a man of the mu'tazelite sect came and began to talk with disbelief in a legal matter. Ta'ous put fingers in both his ears and told his son: "O son! Put fingers in your ears too so that you may not hear his talk for this heart is weak.” Then he said: "O son! Plug your ears tightly". Then he continually went on saying, "O son! Keep your ears plugged forcefully'; until the misled M'utazelite (a sect of Islam in old days who would agree to the laws and principle of Islam only if materially proved or intellectually acceptable) rose up and went away.

Mau'mil bin Isma'il reports, “Abdul-Aziz bin Amin Rashad died. I was present in his funeral procession. His bier was brought and put at Bab al-Safa. There people aligned themselves in rows for his funeral prayer. Then there appeared Sufyan Thauri. People said, ‘There comes SufyanThauri’ I also saw Sufyan coming. But he came and shouldering through the rows he went on proceeding and did not say the funeral

prayer for him because this man was a Mur'jite (who believes that all the verses on the torture of hell in the Quran are merely (Allah forbid!) commentary and whoever simply orally acknowledges the Kalimah ‘La Ilaha illallah,’ though one may have no belief in it in one's heart will go to Paradise, and no sins will be written even if one does not say the prayers, etc.).”

Isa Zabi reports, “A man used to go with us to Hazrat Ibrahim. Then Hazrat Ibrahim received information that the man had joined the Mur'jites sect. So Ibrahim told him, ‘Now you must go from us, please don't come here anymore.’”

A man came to Imam Ibn Sirin and began to talk on one of the subjects of fate. The Imam said to him: “Get up from here or I will get up myself.”

Once Imam Abu Yusuf was relating the Hadith that the Holy Prophet used to like ‘bottle gourd’ (Kadu). Suddenly the words, ‘But I don't like it,’ escaped from a man's tongue. Imam Abu Yusuf was so much infuriated that he drew out his sword and said: "I relate a Hadith and vis-à-vis you say that you don't like it. Repent for it right away, otherwise I will behead you". Accordingly, he immediately repented and the Imam spared his life, and this was although the man had spoken only casually and did not mean any ridicule or denial. But since it was apparently a contradiction of the apostolic Sunnah, Qazi Abu Yusuf dealt with him like manner.

Permission has not been given to keep relations and contacts with people who sneer at the Holy Prophet's methods. Accordingly, it has been said: -

“Thou wilt not find folk who believe in Allah and the Last Day loving those who oppose Allah and His messenger, even though they be their fathers or their sons or their brethren or their clan.” (LVIII: 22)

Then, further, the faith of such believers who do not keep friendship with Allah and His Apostle's opponents has been much praised and they have been promised great rewards, prosperity and divine pleasure.

Hence we should also have hatred for such people who hate Allah's religion and the methods brought by the Holy Prophet and his auspicious Sunnahs, although such people be our fathers, brethren, sons, or of our family or clan.

Along with hatred for them we should also offer our exemption before Allah and His Apostle that "O Allah! We are disgusted with their action and so exempt us from that end and consequence which they are heading!”

For, as already stated earlier, very great and severe punishments and disgrace in the world and the hereafter have been ordained for Allah's and His Apostle's opponents, as Allah Most High has said: -

"Know they not that whoso opposeth Allah and His messenger, his portion verily is Hell, to abide therein! That is the extreme abasement." (IX: 63)

It is because they are totally devoid of faith, for had they had faith, they would have certainly cherished love for the Apostle and when they had had love for him they would not have made fun of his Sunnahs but would have loved them, as the Holy Prophet has himself said: -

'If you wish to measure your faith and examine it, see how much love you have for the Holy Apostle. And then if you want to know whether you have love or not for him, and if it is there how much it is, then see how much love you have for the sunnah, how much regard and care you have for it and how far you act upon it. And when one does have love for Sunnah and also acts upon it, one will go to Paradise and there too one will live near the Holy Apostle.'

In contrast to this, when one is not in love with the Sunnah, it means that one does not love the Holy Apostle and thus one's faith is not perfect.

This Crime Will Be Pointed Out In Hell Also

This crime is so great that it will be pointed out in Hell and then punishment will be meted out, as it is said in a Hadith. Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Umar says that the denizens of Hell will first call the superintendent of Hell, they will keep calling him but they will not receive any reply. At last they will receive the reply after 40 years. The superintendent of Hell will say, 'Abide herein only.' Then they will directly complain to Allah and say: -

"Our Lord! Our evil fortune conquered us, and we were erring folk. Our Lord! Oh, bring us forth from hence. If we return (to evil) then indeed we will be wrong-doers." (XXIII: 106-107)

The answer to this complaint will be given to them after a very, very long time - time equal to the interregnum between the creation and the end of the world. And when the answer will be given, it will be this: -

"Be gone therein, and speak not unto Me." (XXIII: 109)

Now these people will be completely disheartened and will continue to bray like donkeys while being singed. Then their faces will undergo change and they will be distorted. Then some occupants of Paradise will come to them with the permission for intercession but will not be able to recognise any one. The denizens of Hell will say that they were such and such but the occupants of Paradise will say: "This is wrong; we don't recognise you"

Now the denizens of Hell will call Allah and will receive the afore-said answer. Then the doors of Hell will be closed and they will continue to rot there. To put them to shame and to make them repentant of a prodigious sin, a heinous crime of theirs will be pointed out to them that they used to make fun of the beloved bondmen of Allah and used to make their invocations the topic for jesting, which Allah Most High describes in the Quran thus: -

“Lo! There was a party of My slaves who said: Our Lord! We believe therefore forgive us and have mercy on us for Thou art best of all who show mercy; but ye chose them for a laughing-stock until they caused you to forget remembrance of Me, while ye laughed at them. Lo! I have rewarded them this day for as much as they were steadfast; and they verily are the triumphant.” (XXIII: 109-111)

It is known from this verse also that scoffing and sneering is a special sign and a peculiar crime of the infidels and the denizens of Hell- a crime that takes man to Hell. Besides this verse, it has been stated in several verses of the Quran. As such, Allah Most High says in Surah-e Al-Mutaffif’in as under: -

“Those in Sin used to laugh at those who believed, and whenever they passed by them, used to wink at each other in mockery and when they returned to their own folk, they returned jesting; and when they saw them they said; Lo! These have gone astray. Yet they were not sent as guardians over them. This day the believers will laugh at the unbelievers, on high couches, gazing. Are not the disbelievers paid for what they used to do?” (LXXXIII: 29-36)

Regarding this Ibn Kathir states that these infidels had gained the upper hand; they used to poke fun at the believers and used to jeer at them while coming and going, and used to despise and humiliate them, and on meeting their own people used to talk nonsense and concoct stories about the believers. They used to get what they wished but thanking for divine bounties apart, bent on the contrary for infidelity, they used to go harassing the Muslims, and because the Muslims did not agree with them, they used to call Muslims astray.

Allah Most High says that these infidels had not been sent as guardians over the Muslims. Why were they then anxious about the Muslims, always pursuing them?

What business had they to look after their actions and why did they indulge in gibing and taunting them?

On the Day of Judgement the believers would be laughing at the disbelievers and, sitting on couches, would be enjoying the greatest pleasure of gazing at their Allah, which is a clear proof of the fact that they were not astray although the disbelievers used to call them astray. The disbelievers would receive the full compensation for what they sued to do with the believers in the world. They would be laughed at for the fun that they used to make of the Muslims. They used to depreciate the Muslims but Allah appreciated them.

It is known from these verses that jeering and gibing is a peculiar sign of those who disbelieve in Allah and His prophets and are the enemies and foes of His saints. Hence it will be no wonder if people having this habit will be resurrected along with Allah's and His Apostle's enemies, even as it has been said that those who renounce prayers will rise up along with Pharoah, Haman, etc. because there is a common factor of disobedience with them in giving up praying; just as Pharoah and Haman and others of their like used to make fun of the prophets, they also make fun of Allah's chosen slaves.

This Has Also Been the Habit of the Jews and Christians

Similarly, scoffing at and ridiculing religion and things religious has also been the habit of the Jews and Christians ho received the Scripture before. As such, Allah Most High says: -

“O ye who believe! Choose not for friends such of those who received the Scripture before you, and of the disbelievers, as make a jest and sport of your religion. But keep your duty to Allah if ye are true believers. And when ye call to prayer they take it for a jest and sport. That is because they are a folk who understand not.” (V:57-58)

In these verses Allah Most High hath forbidden friendship with Jews and Christians because they have made religion a plaything and a jest.

Hence, as it has already been stated in the foregone, that the unfortunate, deprived, unlucky wretches who, notwithstanding their oral claims of Islam, consider the methods and Sunnahs of Islam archaic and look at them contemptuously and who gibe at those who act upon the Islamic ways and Sunnahs, but in fact also talk blasphemy,

should be completely avoided; neither should anyone have friendship nor relations with them; on the contrary, other Muslims should also be saved from them, because association with such ill-natured people puts faith into jeopardy, while to save one's own as well as other Muslim brethren's faith and belief is a duty.

In the first verse there is mention of making fun of absolute religion or anything religious and in the second it is about jesting at the prayer-call (Azan). Imam Zutiri says that there is mention of the prayer-call in the Quran also and then he recited the above-quoted verse.

Incidents relating to the mocking of Sunnah and disobeying the command of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

There was a Christian in Madina. Whenever he heard the words ‘I testify that verily Muhammad is Allah's Apostle,’ in the prayer-call, he - Allah forbid! - used to say: 'May the liar be burnt'!

Accordingly, Allah made him taste the relish of this action of his. It so happened that one night the maidservant brought fire into the house. A spark flew up from it and set the house on fire. The man and his whole house and belongings were reduced to ashes. Such happened to be the consequence of jesting at the prayer-call!

Plenty of exemplary incidents of those who jeered and scoffed at things religious and the religionists are available in historical books, Man's faith is lost by making fun of any religious thing howsoever small it may be. What can be a greater torture than this that by blurting out a single sentence a man goes out of the believers' row and enters the disbelievers' line.

Any directive of religion, howsoever small as regards action it may be, is not small in grade as regards creed and magnitude. Even as sneering at any important part of religion deprives man of the wealth of faith, making fun of lesser Sunnahs like the wearing of beard, and trimming the mustachios, etc. - which are in fact very high and important Sunnahs - is as effective in the deprivation of faith as of prayer, fasting, etc.

Hence we consider it necessary to make mention here of two things concerning this topic. One is this that by way of a specimen we quote here those sentences which when they escape the tongue deliberately or forgetfully or in anger anathematise man. And, secondly, we relate some exemplary incidents of making fun of and jesting at men of religion, as to how Allah Most High punishes those in the world. Also those

who jeer at and vex the followers of Sunnah and the orthodox, so that people may take a lesson and save themselves from harassing and hectoring them.

Punishment for Those who sneer At the Holy Prophet

There is a story related of the Holy Prophet himself which has been reported by Hazrat Abdal-Rahman bin Abu Bakr al-Siddiq that a man used to sit in the holy company and whenever the Holy Prophet talked, that fellow used to make a sneer on his face. The Holy Prophet said: "Be like that"! Accordingly, that man (always) pulled faces until he died. In this incident there is mention of vexing through mockery.

The Result Of Administering Medicine Against The Holy Prophet's Order

But there is a threat of chastisement even if an action apparently intended to give comfort causes pain and suffering, as it happened when the Holy Prophet was on his deathbed. While he was overcome with the agony of death there occurred divergence of opinion among the Companions whether or not medicine should be administered to him, although he had earlier refused to take medicine and then had fainted.

Some of the Companions were of the opinion that this refusal was of the same type as every sick man does inadvertently in the intensity of the disease and due to un-mindfulness and swooning, whereas others asserted that his holiness's order should be carried out and he should not be considered like the common run of men.

However, a decision was made and medicine was administered to him. When the Holy Prophet regained consciousness he said: "Administer the same medicine immediately to those people, otherwise it is feared that Allah Most High might involve them in some punishment."

Here an act had been done out of complete sincerity and under the sentiment of love, but since it caused inconvenience, the Holy Prophet ordered them to take the same medicine as otherwise there was apprehension of their entanglement in divine wrath.

Then how severe will be the divine clutching for an act that is done out of contempt, enmity and vexing, one can only imagine!

The Evil End of A Woman Who Lodged A False Litigation against Hazrat Saeed bin Zayd

Many other cases of prompt visitation on men who sneered at and pestered the Holy Prophet have been recorded in books of biography. Those apart, when even a little annoyance and pain was caused to his lovers and devotees of his Sunnahs, Allah Most High, according to His declaration, "Whoever nurses enmity against any one of My saints, to him is given an ultimatum of war from Me," which destroyed their enemies immediately. Such a case is reported by Hazrat Orwah bin Zubayr that when a dispute arose between Sa'eed bin Zayd bin Umar and Arwah bint Aws, she took the case to Merwan bin al-Hakam.

The claim was that Sa'eed bin Zayd had misappropriated some of Arwah's land. Sa'eed bin Zayd said: "How could I usurp her land while I have heard the Holy Prophet's hadith!" Merwan asked him what he had heard. He said: "I have heard the Holy Prophet say that whoever usurps even a span of land of anyone, on the Day of Judgement a collar of that much measurement of all the seven layers of the earth will be put around his neck". Hearing this Hadith, Merwan said: "Now I will not ask you to produce any other witness in this litigation."

Hazrat Sa'eed invoked a curse saying: "O Allah! If this woman is a liar, make her blind and give her death in her own land." The narrator reports that she did not die as long as she did not become blind, and the other part of the curse was fulfilled thus that one day she was walking on her land when she fell into a ditch and died.

A tradition is also related in Muslim Sharif. Its narrator reports: "I saw that she had become blind and used to beg small coins from the people and used to say: 'Hazrat Sa'eed's curse has befallen me'. And one day when she was passing by a well in the same land for which she had sued Hazrat Sa'eed, she accidentally fell into it and the same well became her grave".

Visitation For Nursing Enmity Against Hazrat S'ad

Similar is Hazrat S'ad bin Abi Waqqas's case related in the Bukhari Shaiff that he had been appointed as governor of Kufa by the second caliph, Hazrat Umar Farouq. An anonymous letter reached Hazrat Umar Farouq from Kufa complaining that Hazrat S'ad did not lead the prayers properly. Accordingly, Hazrat Umar sacked him and appointed Hazrat Ammar bin Tasir in his place. Hazrat Ibn Mas'ud ^ was appointed superintendent of the public treasury and Hazrat S'ad ibn Abi Waqqas was recalled to Madina.

When he approached Hazrat Umar, Hazrat Umar asked him: "These Kufans say that you don't lead the prayers properly"?

Harrat S'ad replied: "Allah! I used to lead the prayer in the same way, as did the Holy Prophet. I did not show any remises in it. When I led the 'Isha prayer, I used to lengthen the first two rak'ahs and shorten the latter two". "O Abu Ishaq! My supposition,' remarked Hazrat Umar, "regarding you was the same".

Thereafter Hazrat Umar dispatched an inquiry commission along with him to Kufa to inquire and investigate from the Kufans.

When this commission reached Kufa and started its work, the members of the commission did not leave any mosque where they must not have inquired about Hazrat S'ad, but they found that all the people used to praise him, until they reached the mosque of Banu Abas. A man from amongst them whose name was Usaqa bin Qatadah and his patronymic appellation was Abu S'adah, stood up and said, ‘When you beseech us, so hear that S'ad does not go with the army for jihad, that he does not divide the booty properly and that he does not decide disputes justly.’

At this Hazrat S'ad said in reply, "By Allah! I also give you three curses, ‘0 Allah! If this slave of yours is a liar and he has said so only to make a show to the people and for their hearing, give him a very long life, make him extremely needy and involve him in mischief!’”

Reconciliation between This Accusation And Curse by Our Revered Shaikh

Our revered Shaikh (may his shadow never grow less!) says that that man had levelled three charges against Harrat S'ad. The first of these was that, ‘He is afraid of death,’ and since he wants to live long in the world, he does not go for fighting. So Hazrat S'ad said: ‘0 Allah! You know that I don't want this. So lengthen his own life!’”

The second charge was that, ‘He does not divide the booty properly.’ The implication of it is that I am afraid of poverty and so, for fear of poverty I amass wealth with me. ‘0 Allah! You know that I have no greed for money. So make him needy of single cowries (i.e., reduce him to abject poverty) which he may go about begging from the people.’

"The third charge levelled by him was that, ‘He does not decide (cases) justly.’ The implication is that he called me wicked. ‘O Allah! Involve him in wickedness.’

The narrator reports that he fell on very evil days. Whenever anyone inquired his condition, he would say: "I am a very senile, afflicted man. S'ad's curse pursues me".

The narrator, Abd al-Malik bin Omayr says: "Thereafter I myself saw that he was alive for such a long time that his eyebrows had hung down upon his eyes. He used to go about begging from the people and used to tease and tease girls on the way.’

Hazrat S'ad bin Abi Waqqas was the Holy Prophet's high-ranking Companion as well as a maternal uncle. The result of accusing him falsely, Allah showed in this very world, and about the Hereafter Allah Alone knows best. "O Allah! We seek Your shelter from Your wrath and the Apostle's anger and Your saints' anger!"

The End Of A Man Who Affronted Imam Abu Hanifa

One of the opponents of Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifa came to him and said: "I want to marry your mother. Give her to me in wedlock.”

The purpose of that man was to vex the great Imam otherwise the Imam's respectable mother was much too old.

May we be sacrificed on the Imam's good morals that though he felt very much aggrieved, he neither rebuked him nor showed anger. On the contrary, he said to him: "Wait! I will just go in to ask my mother and bring her reply."

The revered Imam went in and when he came out he found the man lying dead. This was the result of the great Imam's silence over that unfortunate wretch's attempt at aggrieving him.

Aggrieving the Men of Allah

My Chief's and Master’s Statement

My chief and master (may his shadow never grow less!) often says that when any one aggrieves the men of Allah, and they do not take its revenge and instead observe reticence, it is usually a very dangerous thing and there is fear of the oppressor's destruction.

Qutb Al-Irshad Maulana Gangohi's Statement

He says that the people who insult religious divines and scoff at them, their faces turn from the Qiblah in the grave. He who wishes can see it for himself.

And why should it not be so? For as much as a man may be a follower of the Shari'ah and the Sunnah, he will be a friend of Allah to that extent, and when anyone aggrieves a friend of Allah, he is given an ultimatum of war by Allah. There is a Hadith-e Qudsi:

"He who nurses enmity with any one of My friends, to him I give ultimatum of war." When the Creator of both the worlds gives ultimatum of war to anyone, what doubt can there be regarding his destruction?

Hence history is replete with such incidents that whenever people insulted and humiliated a slave of Allah, hurt him by hand or by tongue, Divine Jealousy (ghayrat) immediately took revenge and ruined and destroyed the antagonists.

The End of Imam Bukhari's Opponents

The incidents of Hazrat Imam Bukhari's affliction are very well known. One of these is narrated here. The ruler of Bukhara in his time was Khalid bin Ahmed Zahli. He sent an order to Imam Bukhari asking him to teach Jama-e Sahih and history etc. to his sons at his mansion.

In view of the dignity of the Science of Hadith the Imam replied: "This is the Science of Hadith. I don't want to degrade it. If you are interested, you may send your sons to my majlis so that they may also acquire knowledge like other students".

In reply the amir said: "If this is so, then when my sons come to you, do not allow other students to attend upon you. My doorkeepers will stand at your door and will not let anyone enter. My pride cannot tolerate it that weavers etc. may also be sitting in the majlis where my sons are be present."

How could the Imam's glorious liberality tolerate this? He candidly replied: "It could never be so. This science is the Holy Prophet's ﷺ legacy which the whole ummah shares equally, with none having any particularity."

The amir of Bukhara was much offended by this talk and discord went on increasing. It came to such a pass that the amir enticed Ibn Abi al-Warqa' etc., from amongst the externalists (Ahl-e Zahir), to join him and all of them jointly started a campaign of scoffing at the Imam's tack (maslak) and picking holes in his ijtehad (personal exertion to form an opinion in religious matters). They prepared a general application and under the same pretext they manoeuvred to exile the Imam from Bukhara. (Political method of deprivation through manipulation of public opinion).

Imam Bukhari made an invocation at the Divine Court saying, "O Allah! Involve these people in the same calamity they want to involve me in." As such, a month later Khalid bin Ahmed Zabli was dismissed and there came an order from the caliph of the Muslims that Khalid should be mounted on the back of a donkey and be paraded in the whole town. Similarly, his other accomplices who longed to humiliate Imam Bukhari had themselves to face humiliation and ignominy, and Allah Most High put them all to disgrace.

Death Of A Man Who Behaved Audaciously With Allamah Daqiq Al-'Id

One day a man came to the presence of Allamah Daqiq al-'Id and committed some audacity. The Allamah said, "You've charged yourself to death". This statement was repeated thrice. Accordingly, exactly three days later that man died.

Similarly, some tyrannous amir aggrieved his (i.e. Allamah Daqiq al-`Id's) brother. When the Allamah came to know of it, he said regarding the amir, "May he be killed"! Accordingly, he was killed.

Murder of Khwaja Nizamuddin Awlia's Oppressor

Harrat Khwaja Nizamuddin Awlia's story is very famous. Sultan Qutb al-Din Khalji tried to compel Hazrat Khwaja Sahib in many things against his will. He ordered him to say the Friday prayer in his Jam'e Masjid but Hazrat apologised and never went to his court. The king tried to stop the common people from attending on him but that also could not be done. At last the king decided that if the Khwaja did not come to salute him on the first-moon night, he would be forcibly dragged to the royal palace. But this was, from Allah's side, the Khwaja's last test.

Accordingly, the people sighted the new moon after the Maghrib prayer and became anxious as to what would happen then. But the same evening Khusrau Khan murdered the king and thus Allah Most High Himself put an end to his friend's enemy. (Story of Khalji's murder can be verified from the book of Indian history).

The Death of an Oppressor Who Hurt A Muezzin in the Prophet's ﷺ Mosque

There was a muezzin in the Prophet's Mosque in Madina. One day he was giving the prayer-call for the Fajr prayer. When he shouted the words "As-Salato khayrum mm an-naum (Prayer is better than sleep)," an attendant of the mosque came and slapped him. The muezzin wept and said: "0 Apostle of Allah! This happened to me in your presence".

Then and there the attendant who inflicted the slapping received an attack of paralysis. People lifted him up and took him to his home where he died after three days.

Visitation for Audacity In Respect Of Religious Elders

In our recent past, a few years back, at the time of the partition of the country, there occurred some incidents that whenever anyone caused pain to any religious elder on account of any worldly, personal or political reason or due to enmity; Divine Jealousy was at once stirred and took revenge.

Before the partition of the country Hazrat Husain Ahmed Madani (may his secret be sanctified!) went to one or two places on tour. There he was met with some opposition and some of them adopted such violence that a man came before him, stripped himself completely and just to vex him danced before him in that stark naked condition.

Praise be to Allah that secularly too this incident does not stain Hazrat Madani's reputation and dignity; on the contrary, that man, in his madness of antagonism earned disgrace for himself. But Divine Jealousy did not tolerate this too and took revenge.

Accordingly, after the partition, the same man came to the heirs of Hazrat and cried and begged pardon and said, "The punishment for the ill-treatment that I had committed with Hazrat Madani, in my madness of opposition, I received in this form. During the riots of 1947 purdah observing womenfolk of my family were made naked and insulted before me and were made to dance even as I had stripped and danced before Hazrat Madani. And now years have passed over this incident yet my crime has not been pardoned and from time to time divine wrath still continues to descend upon this slave".

If Allah Himself reminds these people of their guilt and bestows upon them the grace to cry over it, then they can be released from such afflictions.

And only worldly afflictions are not considered adequate; rather the grace for doing good is also seized, so much so that sometimes the wealth of faith is also taken away.

Divine Wrath Is Still Raining Down

Accordingly, a gentleman came to me. He talked about his owing allegiance to every great saint and then he began to say, "I had vowed allegiance to him and my condition was very good and I was very regular in following the Shari'ah; I was precision, but for some years now my condition has very much deteriorated and I have been involved in all sorts of sins."

So I asked him as to where he was before the partition of the country. He mentioned that region which is under divine wrath and curse, and on my further inquiring he confessed those crimes that he committed with regard to the religious elders, particularly Hazrat Madani (may Allah illuminate his grave!).

I therefore counselled him that he should keep begging Allah to pardon this particular crime and continue to weep in His Court and should remit as much recompense as he could to Hazrat Madani. Thank Allah that by doing so his condition is now improving.

Accordingly, after the occurrence of such events and incidents, our holy Shaikh's (may his shadow never grow less!) far seeing sight had made out that his ummah is suffering the punishment for those actions it had committed with its beneficent elders; and it will further suffer, as Maulana Rum has said:- "When Allah wants to expose anyone, He directs his inclination towards scoffing at the pure ones.”

The Elders Internal Perception

The Lord of the Universe endows these gentlemen with that far-seeing and truth-seeing insight about which the Holy Prophet ﷺ says: - ‘Fear the believers' intuitive perception (firasat) because they see with the light of Allah (i.e. even from long distances and in pite of the distance of time and space they see things).’ And what is hidden behind thousands of veils and in the recesses of hearts, Allah Most High shows them. By it, it is not meant the disclosing of the secrets of anyone or anyone' ignominy, but the veils are removed for the good of the people so that they may lead the people towards the path of truth and train them properly.

Accordingly, our Shaikh, having observed the causes of these misfortunes, calamities and conditions, wrote a book on this topic, entitled ‘AI-I'tedal fi Maratib al-Rijal’ alias ‘Islami Siyasat’, in which he has prevented the Muslims from deplorable actions like insulting, aggrieving, scoffing at and ridiculing men of Allah. Besides the external eyes, Allah Most High gives his approved slaves those eyes of the heart also wherewith they can see all things which the reason, insight and guidance of these human like animals cannot see. Millions of such incidents are available in the Islamic history. Since presently it is not our topic, we do not mention them here. Only one incident is mentioned.

Khwaja Hasan Afghani's Intuitive Perception

Khwaja Hasan Afghani was one of the most glorious successors of Hazrat Shaikh Baha al-Din Zakariya Multani. He possessed the power of illumination (kashf) and miraculous gifts.

Biographers write about him that in the esoteric sciences he was absolutely unschooled, but the condition of the esoteric sciences was such as if the whole Protected Tablet was inscribed on his unmalicious chest.

People, just to test him, used to write three lines on paper to show him; one line from the holy Quran, the second from the prophetic Hadith lore and the third from the

sayings of the Sufi Shaikh. Having observed them he would put his index finger on the Quranic line and would say, "This is Allah's speech". Then he would point towards the line of Hadith and would say: "This is prophetic order'; and then putting his hand on the third line he would say: "This line is from the sayings of the Sufi Shaikhs" When the people asked him: "How did you know this"? He would say: "There is no reason for identification, but when I look at the Quranic line I see that its light extends up to infinite space (La Makan), the appearance of Hadith I see up to the seventh heaven and the light of the sayings of the Sufi Shaikhs I behold up to the lunar sky."

To Hold Praiseworthy Acts (Mustabat) In Disdain Leads One To Infidelity

The real dependence is on the end. If one's end comes with correct beliefs, there is hope of success from Allah; otherwise there is nothing but loss.

Hence, one should fear the smallest or the biggest thing whereby faith and belief are adversely affected, more than ones fear of fire etc., so that no such sentence regarding the Shari'ah or divine commandments or the Sunnahs should escape the tongue whereby one maybe deprived of faith; because this thing grows up insidiously and slowly.

First of all man considers a praiseworthy act lightly, then he moves onto something above it, and then another, until the holding in disdain of one praiseworthy act at last leads man to infidelity, as Hazrat Shah Abd al-Aziz Muhaddith Dehlavi writes: -

"When man considers the civil mores and praiseworthy acts of the Shari'ah trivial, he is punished with the deprivation of the sunnah, and he who considers the sunnah lightly, he is given the torture of deprivation of obligatory duties and he who takes obligatory duties lightly is involved in deprivation of gnosis. That is, once starting, this chain of events does not stop but goes on until a wealth like that of faith goes out of his heart."

An Exemplary Incident

Tha'albah bin Hatib Ansari once requested the Holy Prophet ﷺ to pray for wealth. The Prophet ﷺ said: "A little for which one can thank is better than that too much

which is beyond one's capacity." But he again made the same request and his holiness again explained to him: "You don't like to keep your condition like that of Allah's Prophet ﷺ. By Allah! Had I wished these mountains to turn into gold and silver, they would have walked with me."

Tha'albah said: "Sir! By Allah! My intention is this that if Allah makes me rich I may spend generously and discharge the rights of every one.”

So the Holy Prophet ﷺ invoked for prosperity in his goods. As such, his goats began to multiply like insects, so much so that Madina had no space to accommodate his increasing animals. So he went out to open ground. He used to say the Zuhr and Asr prayers with the congregation but not the other prayers. The animals multiplied still more and he had to go still farther. Now, except the Friday prayer, all other prayers were left. Goods continued to increase. At last he stopped coming for Friday prayer also. He used to ask from the caravans as to what had been discoursed in the Friday khutbah, until the order came for taking sadaqah (charity) from his goods and when the couriers went to realise the sadaqah from him, he began to say: "Well, well, this seems like jizyah; it is just like what is realised from the infidels as jizyah. Well, for the present, please go away and come later".

When they went again to realise it, he gave the same reply. So verses were revealed from Allah Most High. When he came to know of this, he came to the Holy Prophet ﷺ and expressed the desire that his sadaqah should be accepted. But the Prophet ﷺ told him that Allah Most High had forbidden to accept his sadaqah, and his holiness did not, till death, accept any thing from him.

Then he brought his goods during Hazrat Abu Bakr's regime but he too refused to accept them. Then he came during the Farouqi caliphate. Hazrat Umar Farouq told him: "When the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not accept your goods, how can I accept them"? Then he offered his goods during Hazrat Usman's caliphate. Hairat Usman said: "When the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the two caliphs did not accept your sadaqah, how can I accept it"?

So strictly did the revered Caliphs follow the Holy Apostle ﷺ and conform to his sunnah that none of them accepted what the Holy Apostle ﷺ had declined on the first day from him until he (Ibn Hatib) expired.

And what happened to Ibn Hatib? First he made promises to show generosity but instead of generosity he practised miserliness and instead of keeping his promise he committed breach of promise. For this breaking of promise and lying Allah Most High

permeated his heart with hypocrisy: instead of becoming an obedient Companion of the Holy Prophet and achieving high ranks and grades, he, by opposing the Holy Prophet in a small matter, went on increasing in transgression until he joined the list of the hypocrites.

Similarly, making fun of and disdaining ordinary manners of the Shari'ah leads man to infidelity; rather, some sentences are such that if they are spoken regarding these manners or regarding the Sunnahs, even then a man goes out of the pale of faith. Hence one should guard one's tongue very carefully. In the following pages we will quote some fatwas of the religious elders and eminent muftis regarding scoffing at religion so that masses may be very careful in saving themselves from such ruinous acts. May Allah Most High bestow upon us grace and end our lives on faith! Amen!

Details Regarding Blasphemous Sentences

Qutb al-Irshad Hazrat Gangohi (may his grave be illuminated!), in reply to a query, writes that to utter a blasphemous sentence deliberately, though there may be no belief in it, is infidelity (kufr). Accordingly it is stated in Raddal-Mukhtar that the author of the Bahr says, the substance of which is that, the man who pronounces a blasphemous sentence by way of scoffing or frolic and sport, though he may not believe it, is in all respects, an infidel. And the man who under duress or mistakenly utters a sentence of blasphemy shall not be, on all hands, an infidel. And the man, who deliberately articulated a blasphemy, is, unanimously, an infidel. But the man who utters a blasphemy of his own volition when he is not aware of its blasphemous matter, there is divergence of opinion regarding him. And the man, who uttered a blasphemy by way of joking though he may not have any belief in it, will become an apostate, because he held the liability to be light and such blasphemy is like habitual blasphemy.

Nearly twenty eminent ulema have endorsed this fatwa. It is stated in Fatwa No.604 of ‘Fatawa 'Aiamgiri’ that if a man blasphemed deliberately, although he did not know that it was blasphemous, but since he had uttered it of his own choice he, according to the majority of ulema, will be anathematised and his apology for not knowing will not be accepted. But some ulema have dissented in anathematising such a man. It is stated in the Khulasah that if the jester spoke a blasphemous sentence by way of scoffing and humour, it shall be blasphemy according to all, though his belief may be against it; and if a man blasphemed mistakenly, e.g., it was his intention to pronounce a word which is not blasphemous but then through a slip of the tongue a blasphemous sentence escaped his tongue, it shall not be infidelity according to all (the muftis). This is mentioned in Fatwa Qazi Khan.

(1) This has been quoted by Hazrat Gangohi (may his grave be illuminated!), and fifty-five eminent ulema and muftis have endorsed it. After writing his name, there remains no need of writing the names of other divines; just to write the number fifty-five is sufficient.

He writes: - "He who considers a divine order or a prophetic sunnah to be a defect or a cause of indignity or calls its performer undignified, is indubitably accursed and is an infidel; and one who is an opponent of Allah Most High is a denizen of Hell and a renegade. In spite of confessing it to be a divine order and a sunnah if he regards it as a cause of shame and disgrace for himself, it is mostly the cause of his infidelity and antagonism against Allah, for that vicious, accursed fellow considers his own custom of infidelity to be better than Allah's order.

So, to give up contact and dealings with such a man is the very essence of religion, and it is not at all permissible to have relation and proximity with him. On the contrary, separate yourself from him and, considering him to be the most accursed among the people, be his enemy; and never say the funeral prayer for him, for he is an infidel.

(2) Similarly, Hazrat Gangohi writes in another fatwa that to marry between the Two Ids (An interim of two and half months between id-ul-fitr and ld-ul-Azha) is a Sunnah and it is conducive to prosperity (barakaat). The Holy Prophet's ﷺ marriage with Hazrat 'Ayesha Siddiqah # had taken place in the month of Shawwal and she used to marry her relatives in Shawwal too.

So, to consider nikah (wedlock, marriage) in this month as inauspicious is sheer ignorance and disobedience; and it is opposition to and enmity with the Holy Prophet's ﷺ Sunnah. One should repent for such a condition, as otherwise, due to considering the Sunnah to be bad, one would become an infidel. And such a statement is made by an arrogant ignorant man only; a religious scholar would never says such a thing. (Fatwa Rasheediah p.364)

(3) A fatwa has been quoted in Fatawa Rasheedia in which it is stated at one place that similarly scoffing at legal propositions is explicitly a sin. Allah Most High says: -

"Say, Was it at Allah and His revelations and His messenger that ye did scoff? Make no excuse. Ye have disbelieved after your (confession of) belief." (IX: 65-66)

Furthermore it is stated that that accursed sentence, "Those who shave off their beards are better than those who wear beards," is clearly an insult to a continuous Sunnah and is a blasphemous sentence.

(4) Hazrat Maulana Abd al-Hayy Lakhnavi writes in his Fatawa that it is stated in Fatawa Bazzaziah: -

"When Allah Most High is praised with such qualities which do not befit Him or anyone of the Divine Names is scoffed at or anyone of the divine orders is made fun of or Allah's promise or threat is denied, all this is infidelity. Similarly, if one claims that 'I am God', be will become an infidel".

(5) It is stated in Fatawa 'Alamigir that whoever denied anyone of the Quranic verses or ridiculed it; and it is stated in khazanah, called it defective, he will become an infidel. It is so stated in the Tatar Khaniyah also. (Fatawa Alamgiri p. 589)

(6) Hazrat Maulana Shah Vasi Allah has quoted some fatwas in his treatise entitled Tauqir al-Ulama. Some of them are quoted here: -

It is stated in the Moheet that a man sat on a high place to imitate a religious divine and then people came and by way of ridicule and mockery asked propositions (masail) from him and then beat him with a pillow etc. and laughed heartily. So due to this action all of them became infidels because they slurred and disdained religion and the Shari' ah.

(7) It is stated in the same Moheet that a religious divine put his book of Fiqh etc. at the shop of some man and went somewhere. When he returned and passed that shop, the shopkeeper said "Maulana! You had forgotten your saw here" The religious divine said: "I had put a book here, not a saw". The shopkeeper retorted: "Well, it's one and the same thing. The carpenter cuts with a saw and you people cut people's throats with this book, or cut their rights".

The religious divine complained against him to Imam Fuzayl. The latter sentenced him to be beheaded because he had become a renegade by slurring a book of Fiqh and the punishment for a renegade is beheading.

(8) Similarly, it is stated in Sharh-e Fiqh-e Akbar that the man who said that "there is no advantage for me from the Shar'a etc. and according to me it is not in force", he will become an infidel.

(9) It is stated in the Zaheeriyah that a man was told: "Get up, let us go to a majlis (gathering or assembly) of knowledge." At this he replied, "Who can act upon those things these people assert"? Or he said, "What have I to do with an assembly of religious knowledge"? He becomes an infidel.

The first reply amounts to infidelity for the reason that it necessarily follows from it that that man is convinced of 'insupportable liability' (taklif-e mala yataaq); that is, he thinks that Allah has made man liable to such things also which are beyond his power and capacity, although it has been said in the Quran: -

"Allah tasketh not a soul beyond its scope" (II: 286)

And the second sentence becomes blasphemous when it means that, "There is no need of going to attend a meeting or assembly of the ulema."

Accordingly, it is stated in the Jawahir that if a man said, "who can act on what the ulema say?" will become an infidel, because it either necessarily implies 'insupportable liability' or if one denies that they are ulema, it means that whatever the ulema say they impute falsehood in it to the noble prophets (peace be on all of them!), and its being infidelity is evident.

(10) It is stated in Fatawa Sughra that if someone threw a fatwa on the ground through contempt, he will become an infidel.

(11) It is stated in the Tatimma that whoever insulted the Shari'ah or insulted those propositions which are needed in the Shari' ah, he will become an infidel because he belittled a proposition of the Shari'ah.

(12) It is stated in the Moheet that if a religious divine is speaking points of knowledge or is relating authentic Hadith, i.e., Hadith that are proven and not fake, and someone laughed at it saying that "all this is nothing'; whereby the purpose is to reject it, or if he said: "What will be the earthly use of all these things! If it is money, it will be of some use, that is, instead of engaging in all these things, one should engage in earning money for in the present age the value that is commanded by money is not commanded by knowledge'; he will become an infidel, because it is a contradiction of Allah's statement:

"But honour, power and glory belong to Allah and to His messenger and the believers." (LXIII: 8)

The other statement is: -

"While the word of Allah that became the uppermost" (IX: 40).

A Useful Book

In the present age when this disease is common, the book 'Islami Siyasat' should be present in every house, and it should be read again and again. How many times the common run of men should read it I don't say, but they can propose their course or number from the following incident that a friend of ours who is a very high-ranking religious divine once told me that he must have read this book ten times and was still reading it. When such a great divine reads it ten times, the common people may make up their own assumptions. [I translated this book into English for Qari Abdul Hameed panoliwala of Johannesburg, South Africa, in May, 1977, but there is no information so far (Nov. 5,1981) whether he has got it printed and published or not. (Translator)].

By reading this book one would be able to estimate correctly what is meant by insulting and aggrieving men of Allah and what are their results, that one receives disgrace and ignominy in the world and, more than that, not only is one deprived of a wealth like faith, one's Hereafter is also ruined. Much more than and prior to worldly loss and misfortunes and calamities, there is apprehension of the ruin of man's afterlife.

Hence one should very much abstain from annoying such conformers of the Sunnah; rather, one should not at all speak out even a single sentence whereby they may be feeling aggrieved and vexed even a little, as otherwise there is apprehension of destruction.

Precaution Against Scoffing & Taunting Is Necessary

When the effect of one sentence can be this, let alone scoffing, gibing and poking fun in which the extreme purpose of one may be disgracing and insulting the followers of the sunnah. How can then the Jealous Lord and the Owner of the Sunnah, the Sovereign of the World *tolerate it? Hence, taking care of our religion and faith, we should set right our dealings with such religious men who may be the followers of the Sunnah. May Allah bestow grace and understanding upon all of us! Amen!

But if such orthodox conformers of the sunnah happen to be involved in such a polluted atmosphere or in the society of mean persons, where they are execrated and pestered only because of conformance to the sunnah, they should not at all feel confounded. This has happened with the former faithful men also. Accordingly, it is stated in the holy Quran that they used to be pestered for believing Allah to be One. So if we are put to inconveniences for following the Holy Prophet's ﷺ Sunnah, what can be a greater happiness than this? Hence one should not at all care about anyone's opposition, as Mufti Sayyid Abdur Rahim writes in his Fatawa Rahimiyyah that to

leave the true thing on being confounded by the reproach and taunting of the slaves of desire is Abu Talib's wont. Accordingly, the Holy prophet entreated his dying uncle to utter the kalimah 'La ilaha illallaho Muhammadur Rasullullah" only once, but his uncle Abu Talib said: "You have offered to me a religion which I consider superior to all the religions of the world, but had I not had the fear of people's censure and taunting, you would have found me brave in accepting the truth."

Hazrat Huzayfa's Method

The sum and substance of it is that to forsake truth for fear of people's scoffing and reproaching is Abu Talib's way, and to stick to truth unflinchingly, not caring a tinker's damn for the censure of the whole world, is the sunnah of the crusader of Islam, Hazrat Huzayfa bin Yaman . Once he was travelling. While eating his meal a morsel fell down from his auspicious hand. Cleaning it he began to put it into his mouth. The Persians were watching. His servant rounded him in the ear, "Sir, please don't do like this. These Persians consider it very bad to pick up and eat a fallen morsel and look down upon such persons." He retorted "Should I give up the Sunnah of my Beloved Friend for the sake of these idiots"?

Hence, under any circumstances and for any reason a Sunnah must not be given up, though the censurer's may say any thing. As my chief and spiritual director, the Shaikh al-Hadith (may his shadow never grow less!) wrote in a letter, "For the future too, my advice is this only, that you should not be grudging in trying to spread the Holy Prophet's and the noble Companions' (may Allah be pleased with all of them!) way of life and should not care a pin if the worldlings consider you despicable and insignificant. Urdu couplet: -The people may consider me deprived of dignity and sedateness but let him not think that I am not worthy of his banquet.

Two Necessary Things

In fact nowadays a mentality of freethinking and hatred for religion is being created, for the common run of men who are usually absolutely simple-minded. There is not a scintilla of this free thought and carelessness about religion, nor of scoffing at religious things, religious commandments and the religious elders and the noble Companions in their minds. But the things that corrupt their minds and deviate them from the behaviour and right beliefs of their ancestors and religious august men and create aversion in their hearts for the Holy Prophet's auspicious Sunnahs are two: -

One of them is to associate with such men of mischievous and devilish qualities who do not believe in the Holy Prophet ﷺ, the noble Companions and the religious august men nor follow this religion of truth. So one is to distance oneself from the company of such evil men.

The other is not to read the books written by such persons, for the apparent form and the apparent topic of these books might be something else, but the real theme and motive is to create hatred for the coherent and consecutive religion that has come down to us from the Holy Prophet ﷺ and also to produce aversion for those religious predecessors through whom this religion reached us as well as for the consecutive religious commandments. Allah forbid!

These are the only two things whereby the beliefs of our simple-minded common men are being corrupted. Hence, with whomsoever you may associate, you should ponder over his talk in loneliness and if you find criticism or insult of the holy Companions or religious elders or anything religious from his talk, you should break your relations with him from the moment you feel convinced of his attitude, as there is apprehension of the corruption of beliefs from this too.

The other thing is the reading of books. So as long as it is not known whether the author of the book is of correct belief or an irreligious man, a book of such an unknown author or one whose religious condition is not known should never be read, although such books may have been distributed free of charge. Because, Allah forbid, if the belief admits an error once and if death comes before consulting our ulema of right belief for recanting, one will die with aversion for our predecessors and ancestors. Then what would be and should be the condition of such a man is known to all.

Hence, to maintain the correct beliefs one should avoid the company of irreligious men although they may be glib-tongued and their talks may be very fascinating; one should however shun the company of such human looking satans.

Secondly, one should not read any book that one can lay hands upon without first asking our ulema because the real thing is to maintain the correctness of our faith and belief.

May Allah Most High call us back from this world with the love for the company of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, noble Companions and the religious august men! Ameen!

An Incident about Taimur

It is so related that one day Taimur was glum and in low spirits. So he was reticent. People inquired but he kept quiet. Meanwhile a party of jesters came to him and they began to cut jokes among themselves. One of them said: "I had been to the Qazi of such and such a city, the holy month of Ramazan had begun, so I said to him: 'O Officer of the Shari'ah! Such and such a man devoured the fasts of Ramazan and I have witnesses with me for this'. Hearing this that Qazi said, 'Had that someone eaten up their prayer too, so that we would have been freed from both'".

They broached this topic to make Amir Taimur laugh and dispel his melancholy. But hearing this Taimur was infuriated. He said: "You wicked fellows! For jesting you found the Shari'ah only'; and with these words he ordered that man to be put to death. May Allah have mercy on that being who respected religion and the Shari'ah and held them in esteem and exalted them!

Now some of those sentences from which infidelity necessarily follows are being quoted from Fatawa 'Atamgiri: -

(1) It is stated in 'Itabiah that if someone disapproves of any divine order or the Shari'ah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ e.g. someone is told that Allah Most High hath made it lawful to take four wives and he says that he does not like it, it is infidelity. It is stated in the Tatar Kahniah (FatawaAlanigiri, p.581).

(2) It is stated at one place that the man who did not acknowledge some of the noble prophets (on whom be greetings and blessings!) or did not like some of the apostles Sunnahs, became an infidel. (Ibid. p.583).

(3) If a man said to another: ‘The Holy Prophet ﷺ used to like this…’ e.g., he said: "He used to like the bottle gourd", and the other fellow replied: "I do not like it'; then this is infidelity. This is so reported from Imam Abu Yusuf also, and some modern jurisprudents have said that if it is said by way of contempt, it is infidelity, and it is not infidelity if it is free from contempt. (Ibid, p.587)

(4) If a man said to another: "The Holy Prophet ﷺ, when he took his meal, used to lick his three fingers" So the other fellow said: "This is bad manners (The implication of that accursed fellow is that it is against culture and out of etiquette) and so it is infidelity.

(5) If someone said, ‘What a neat custom it is among the peasants that they take food but do not wash their hands!’ The Shaikh has said that if he has said it by way of insulting the traditional practice, he shall be called an infidel.

(6) And if someone said: "What is this custom! To clip or shave moustache and then to lower it and bring the turban under the throat.” So if he said this to scoff at the Holy Prophet's ﷺ statement, he committed an act of infidelity.

(7) This is stated in the Moheet. If on the day of A'shura someone said: "Apply collyrium for to apply collyrium on this day is an act of Sunnah'; but the other fellow said that it is the work of womenfolk and eunuchs, he will become an infidel. (Ibid. p.588)

(8) Someone said to a sick man: "Say prayer" If the latter replied that he would never say the prayer, and he did not say a prayer until he died, it will be said that he died an infidel.

(9) A man said to another: "Let us say prayer for the fulfilment of this need' But the other man said: "I said many prayers but no need of mine was fulfilled" And this he said byway of dispraise and taunting, he shall become an infidel. This is stated in the Tatar Khaniah. (Ibid., p.591)

(10) Maulana (Ashraf Ali) Thanvi (may Allah illuminate his grave!) was asked a query in which a woman had said: "Shelve Allah's and the Apostle's orders' So he adjudged her to be a renegade and issued the orders applying to women's renegation to her. (Imdadal-Fatawa, p.378)

Maulana Abdul Haq Haqqani's Fatwa

Maulana Abu Muhammad Abdul-Haq Haqqani, author of Tafsir-e-Haqqani, writes in his book 'Aqa'id-e Islam' on the first kind of the causes of infidelity as under. If regarding Allah's order someone says that he does not believe in it; e.g. someone said, 'Come, let us get it decided by the Shari'ah.' but the other fellow says that he does not agree with the decision of the Shari'ah, he becomes an infidel, because merely knowing is not called faith, as otherwise the infidels too knew Allah and the Apostle to be true, and so believing too is a condition.

Regarding the fifth kind of the causes of infidelity, he states, 'Or someone ridiculed any matter of the Shari'ah. For instance, a man started imitating a preacher of the Quran and some people, sitting around him, by way of frolic, began to ask him questions. So all of them became infidels.'

A Necessary Explanation

It is stated in the Fatawa 'Alamgiri that the cases in which anathematization is done unanimously, it is incumbent that one should repent (tawbah) and recant and perform wedlock afresh. And be it clear that in cases where there is divergence of opinion as regards anathematization, the defaulter, however, by way of a precaution, will be ordered to perform the marriage ceremony again and also repent for and recant from what he said. And as regards those words about which it has been said that they are a lapse and not conducive to infidelity, the speaker thereof will not be asked to re-perform the marriage ceremony and recant, although he will be told not to repeat them as otherwise he will be a sinner. This is stated in the Moheet.

The Last Will

Maulana Abdul-Haq Haqqani, at the end of his book, 'Aqa'id-e-Islam, writes by way of a will that no bounty is greater than faith because a sinner too will get release from Hell by reason of his faith and will at last go to Paradise. So, its protection is always incumbent, and to save oneself from sins and to engage in devotions for its (faith's) decoration) is proper. Every thing of this universe is perishable, while that world is eternal. So let not any wise man attach his heart to any thing of this world; on the contrary, let him be eager for that holy universe and resort to the Source of Grace, the Necessarily-existent Being, the Reality of every existing thing, the Great Creator. Persian couplet: -"Attach your heart to the Beloved (lit. Comfort of the Heart) you have, and close your eyes to the rest of the world.'

O man! Leaving physical comfort, turn your face towards the sacred Universe and break the rope of relations before death. Persian couplets: -"In the early Morning the Bird of holy realm whistled to me from the Sidrah tree, saying: ‘Don't take rest in this place infested with snares of accidents. The angels have decorated for you the pleasure-house of love, while you are lying in this house of grief like afflicted people.’”

None will come again to this world. Whatever you want to do, do today. Who knows what is there in store for us tomorrow. So, if anyone feels any doubt anywhere, one should immediately get it solved by any religious divine, and if none is available, one may think that none is wiser than Allah and His Apostle ﷺ; whatever they have said is true. "It is the fault of my own understanding'; because human understanding is unable to have cognition of thousands of worldly affairs!

"0 Allah! Even as You have bestowed faith upon us without our asking for it, kindly also save it from every kind of calamity, and give us entry into Paradise called ‘Jannat al-Firdaus’ and show us not any affliction in the world and the Hereafter"! Ameen!

Maulana Abdul-Haq Haqqani's book, 'Aq'id-e-elslam, is a very comprehensive book for knowing all the beliefs of Islam. Every literate and educated Muslim and those non-Muslims who want to know more about Islam in a systematic manner should go through this book, Correct knowledge is the basis of good conduct. Those who know will come to the right path sooner or later.

I had translated this book into English at the request of an institution but the manuscript is still lying with me unpublished. It will be a great service to those Muslims who have settled in English-speaking countries if this English translation is published and made available to them. There is an awful scarcity of books in English written by true and recognised Muslims scholars and divines on Islamic subjects; and they were perhaps not needed so acutely a few decades bock as they are needed now. In fact the affluent Muslim states should rise to the occasion to fulfil this need with original and translated books. (Translator)

My Chief and Patron Maulana Muhammad Zakaria and his Conformance to the Sunnah

His Extreme Diligence in Acquiring the Prophetic Sciences

His respected self has passed his entire life, from childhood to old age, in learning, teaching and writing upon the prophetic sciences.

Those persons only who have had the good fortune of reading his works can have a correct estimate of his labour and assiduousness in the acquisition of these sciences. In the works which he compiled in the Urdu language, he has collected and translated hundreds of Hadith on each topic in sweet and poignant a manner whereby there is such effectiveness in these books that hundreds of thousands of men have achieved the wealth of faith and certitude and of love for and obedience to Allah and the Apostle from them. Even if one reads these books again and again one does not feel satiated. Due to this magnetic attraction and uncommon popularity the publication of these books of Faza'il (Merits) must have run into millions of copies, because there is hardly any book depot and press which may not have printed and published these books on their own.

Besides this, the high-ranking commentaries he has compiled in Arabic on the tomes of Hadith are almost sui generis not only in the recent past but also among the works of the medieval authors.

His style of expression and diction is so uncommon and rare that every book of his commands the position of a text on which several commentaries can be written. In future there will be no writer on the subject of Hadith who will not need his books. Moreover, these books have facilitated the problem of teaching Hadith.

It is impossible to review all his books in these few pages. His single book entitled Awjaz al-Masalik Sharh-e-Mu'atta-e Imam Malik is a matchless work on all the different practical methods (mazahib) and has made the ulema independent of many books on this topic. As many practical methods of the eminent Imams as are found together, arranged and clarified in this book will not be found either in any book of the ancients' or of the modern'.

Some illustrious ulema of the Malekite practical method have themselves stated that some of the sayings of the Malekite practical method which they did not know they came to know from this book, and that if the author had not called himself a Hanafite

in the introduction of the book, they would not have admitted at thousands of statements of any one that its author is a Hanafite.

His method of reasoning is so matchless and solid that Mu 'atta-e Imam Malik was a convincing book of the Malekite practical method and was a book composed by the author of the practical method, Imam Malik himself, but Hazrat Shaikh al-Hadith has explained it in such a way that he has made it convincing for the Hanafites, also even as a Malekite religious scholar has said that, ‘This author has turned Mu 'atta into a Hanafite.’

Besides this, the diligence and devotion the Shaikh has shown for books of Hadith is simply unequalled. Wherever and on whichever topic and proposition he has set his pen to paper, he has gathered all its related minutiae, generalities, arguments and derivations in a few lines or a few pages in such a manner that every article has become an independent book on its topic. If someone writes a commentary upon these few lines or few pages, one can write books of hundreds of pages. The science of Tafsir (Quranic Exegesis), Hadith, Principles of Hadith, Science of the Chain of Authorities, Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), Principles of Fiqh, Dissents of Ulema, Science of Beliefs, Scholastic Theology (Kalam), Logic, Philosophy, Literature, History, in short, of all the current Islamic disciplines there is none in which he may not have written a book. For details, consult his Aap Biti (Autobiography) part ii. May Allah Most Glorious bestow longevity of life on him and cause the ummah to derive more and more benefit from his exoteric and esoteric sciences and bestow book-form upon his writings so that the ummah may benefit from them!

Endless Grace

The recipients of grace from him are beyond computation. However, the number of those persons who have received grace from him and are busy in benefiting the masses exceeds not hundreds but thousands. Who can then count the number of the recipients of grace? May Allah Most Glorious continue the grace from this holy door which is continually current for the last several generations till the Last Day and cause this Muslim ummah to benefit more and more from this family! Ameen!

The Important Condition for General Popularity

In fact this is the result of annihilating oneself in one's connection with Allah and connection with the Apostle and in the service of religion. He who effaces himself like this, Allah Most High gives him eternal life and bestows upon his grace and his name the honour of popularity in both the worlds. Notwithstanding the connection with Allah and love for the Apostle, if there is no connection with the passion for serving religion, it often happens that its benefit is not contagious but remains

confined to oneself. The benefit becomes general when one is anxious about Islam and the Muslims and also strives for them.

But to tolerate anything else along with the love for Allah and love for the Apostle and to put up with it is not an easy thing for the reason that, "Allah did not make two hearts in the side of any man". But when Allah destines through someone the communication of grace to the people, He creates so much spaciousness and endurance in that one heart, that thousands of hearts cannot combine to bear that burden which that one heart does bear. In spite of there being a volcano of love for Allah and love for the Prophet raging in the heart, Allah hath bestowed so much expansiveness of heart and endurance on our revered master as it should be. Except through the shedding of tears this inner smouldering and the pain of heart is not expressed in fervent words through his auspicious tongue or in any other manner.

The Fire of Love

Once a man came to the presence of Hazrat Raipuri (may Allah illuminate his grave!) and said: "I saw a dream that a huge fire was ablaze and Hazrat Shaikh was sitting in it. On his right thigh were lying two bricks of gold and similarly two on the left thigh. Similarly, two bricks were lying on his right arm and two on the left, and Hazrat Shaikh was sitting unperturbed with self-complacency in that fire, and did not move even a little.

I have heard that at this Hazrat Raipuri said: "This fire is the fire of love and these bricks of gold are those filiations which have been transmitted to him; and to sit in it with self-complacency is Hazrat's consummate self-control and endurance."

Incapable men like us, unacquainted with its ways and customs, cannot offer even its faint idea, let alone its reality, in words. Someone has well said: - (Urdu couplets): "It's the beginning of love; there's neither coming nor going. It's the reign of tears and the regime of sighs. This love is not an easy thing. Understand only this much that it is a sea of fire and one has to drown oneself into it to reach the destination.

Distance and separation in it are already a destruction for life but the more one attains proximity to and union with the Beloved, the soul, instead of getting solace, tosses more restlessly and as some one has said: "I am a soul-melting candle while you are a heart-expanding morn: I burn if I don't see you and I die when you show your face. I am near you so much and far away as I said, 'neither can I bear the union nor endure separation.'"

Effort for Conformance to the Sunnah

We cannot dare to speak more on this topic. May Allah Most Glorious keep his precious being alive with all these graces and blessings for a long time! Ameen!

Even as in this book we have described some events of the religious elders' care and effort for conformance to the Sunnah, we recount some events as to how much care is lavished on the Sunnah at our chief’s place also.

There was a time when the Shaikhs of the Naqshbandiyya order were exemplary in conformance to the Sunnah, and, compared to other orders, conformance to the Sunnah had been considered confined to the Naqshbandiyya order. Similarly, our Chishtiyya Shaikhs too, praise be to Allah, are exemplary in conformance to the Sunnah. In every walk of life and every moment and breath of life the Holy Prophet's ﷺ auspicious life and good conduct used to be and still remains these august men's spectacle. By reason of the same connection our master's entire life too passed in conforming to the Sunnah a correct estimate of which can be had by reading his works, particularly his Aap Biti. As a blessing and a sacred relic some of these events are described here.

Care in Following the Sunnah in Wearing Hair Up to the Nape and Turban

It had been his usual wont throughout his life to wrap a turban. Accordingly, once when this sunnah was mentioned, he very regretfully said: "It was a practice of my entire life to wear bob and turban, but while illness has compelled me to give up many other things, this sunnah has also been given up. Now for many years there is such intense heat in the brain that in severe winters too I hardly put on a muslin cap, otherwise formerly I practised both these Sunnahs constantly".

Care for the Sunnah of Beginning Every Thing with the Right Hand

Once, while starting to bathe him on a Friday, an attendant (due to an accident early in his life in which Hazrat Shaikh injured both his legs and has been handicapped and hence been dependent on the help of his loyal disciples who always attend to all his needs), instead of pouring water on the right shoulder, poured water on the left shoulder first, Hazrat at once challenged him and said: "You don't know even this much about the sunnah that it should be begun from the right side."

Similarly, once an attendant, while helping him to put on the trousers, erroneously tried to insert the left leg first, at which Hazrat immediately jerked his leg and said: "My friend! You are a maulavi and yet you don't know that the right leg should be inserted first.’ Incidents of this type occurred many times. Whether he was busy talking with someone or in hearing or in dictating letters or any other work of utmost importance, but it never happened while putting on trousers, socks etc. on the left leg

first that he must not have immediately prevented the attendant, as if, it is not at all possible that even by mistake the left leg may enter first.

Care For the Sunnahs in Entering the Mosque

Similarly, while entering the mosque, the left foot was not entered first even by mistake, although in the mosque of the old madrasah the place from where the limit of the mosque begins, it is like a line of straight bricks which even a clear sighted man, after looking at it carefully, can discriminate as the limit of the mosque. But in spite of Hazrat's weak sight, rather very nominal eyesight, he never committed a lapse. When he reaches there, first of all the right foot is put into the mosque and therewith the words "Bismillah-e was-salato was-salamo 'ala Rasulullah" come out from Hazrat's tongue; and at the same time Hazrat, as soon as he has entered the mosque, intends for devotional seclusion (i'tikaf).

To insist upon the attendants he told them many times that they too should make this intention of i'tikaf. Several years ago here as well as, in the mosque of the madrash were hung sheets of paper bearing the invocation for entering the mosque along with the words for the intention of i'tikaf in Arabic.

Care For the Sunnahs of Friday

Great care is taken at his place for observing the Sunnahs of Friday also. Besides clothes, every new thing whether personal or domestic, is usually put into use on a Friday, but the change of summer and winter clothes, use of cold water and plain water, change of heavy and light quilts, blankets and bed-sheets in the beginning of winter and summer, in short, in every thing great care is taken at his place that (change of these takes place on a Friday only).

The Friday bath is also so much taken care of at his place that in spite of such intense weakness and old age and severe cold of Saharanpur it was never missed. Though at the time of bathing, five or six attendants are required, Allah Most Glorious has given him such devoted, ever-present and self-sacrificing attendants who consider his comfort their own comfort. May Allah Most High bestow more grace upon them!

Similarly, the applying of perfume (attar) on Friday, after the bath, is a constant practice. Hazrat is very fond of attar. In Honoured Mecca and the Illuminated Madina after each ablution and while going to the noble Haram for attendance he applies attar very carefully.

Once, after having taken the bath on Friday, he was starting to go. He had put on a new shirt. So when Hazrat came out of his room to board the vehicle, his glance fell

upon his shirt which was a little longer than half the calf length. Immediately he asked the attendants and all confirmed it. So he sent for another shirt while standing there. He then put on this shirt cut and stitched according to the Sunnah and immediately sent that new shirt which was lower than half the calf length to be cut to size. This is the reason that it has been said in a hadith that, "a single faqih alone is more formidable for Satan than a thousand devotees", because these august men have a very strict watch over themselves so that no action contrary to the Sunnah and Shari'ah may proceed from them. This watch over themselves as well as on their subordinate is very strict.

Similarly, to take lunch on Friday after the Friday prayer is a Sunnah practice. Hence, Hazrat's practice too, from the very beginning, is to take the lunch along with all the guests after the Friday prayer.

To recite Sura-e Sajdah and Sura-e Dahr in the Fajr (Pre-dawn prayer) prayer on Friday is a Sunnah practice. This traditional reciting is usually done on Friday in Hazrat's mosque but when the gathering is large, he himself tells the imam: "Recite Sura-e Sajdah and Sura-e Dahr today. I said this for the reason that you may not omit them today because the gathering is large, and this Sunnah nowadays has become generally obsolete; perhaps someone in the gathering may revive a feeling and care for it."

Post-Maghrib Nafls

It had been stated in Hadith that the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to lengthen the Sunnah rak'ahs after Maghrib so much so that all the worships (namazis) used to go away. This is Hazrat's practice also.' he says the Sunnah rak'ahs very long.

But it is difficult to know this at his place because of the crowd of guests; all the guests and non-guests remain sitting in the mosque.

This care for the Maghrib Sunnah rak'ahs has been marked during residing at home as well as during journey. Even during journey they are not shortened, so much so that this effort increases further in the journey for pilgrimage and the journey to Hejaz. Rather in this auspicious journey some such Sunnahs which other ulema, even Mash'ikh might not have ascertained, are also observed as much as other Sunnahs.

A Sunnah during the Stay at Arafat

The Holy Prophet ﷺ had once taken milk during the stay at 'Arafat. So, with as much care as people always keep water with them, Hazrat, in order to put this one sunnah of a whole year or a lifetime into practice, very carefully asking the attendants to keep

milk in a thermos or in a vessel, so that even that work which the Holy Prophet ﷺ did once in a life time may not be missed.

The point is that the lovers of the Holy Prophet ﷺ are so keen that they keep in mind even that single work which their beloved Prophet ﷺ performed only once in his entire life, just not to miss it during any pilgrimage-journey.

<u>Umrahs during the Holy Ramazan</u>

Similarly, the performance of umrah during the holy Ramazan is an act of Sunnah. The Holy Prophet ﷺ says, "verily, to perform umrah during Ramazan is equal to performing the Hajj in my company."

In order to achieve this merit and to perform a Sunnah whenever Hazrat chanced to be in the Honoured Mecca during Ramazan, he performed one umrah daily. "In our youthful days'; says Hazrat, "we would put off our clothes after Taraveeh and wrapping ourselves with ahram (unstitched sheets of cloth) we used to go running to Tan'eem and come back running, and after finishing Tawaf (circumambulation) and Sa'i (brisk walk between Safa and Marwah) we would take sehri (pre-dawn meal during Ramazan) and retire to bed. This was the daily practice throughout the Ramazan.'

Three years ago, for as many days as he lived in the Honoured Mecca, it was a daily practice that when the guests finished taking dinner after Taraveeh, all would don ahram and go to Tan'eem with Hazrat in Malek Sahib's car. There would be thirty to forty men with him in two, three vehicles.

On the first of Ramazan when Hzarrat went to Tan'eem for umrah, and reached the open ground behind Masjid-e 'Ayesha, from where the ahram is put on, he sat down on sand and said: "Hazrat 'Ayesha's camel had sat here'; and without spreading the prayer-carpet, he intended for nafls on the sand. On the second day also Hazrat went to the same ground for saying the nafls without spreading a prayer-carpet. When he was about to intend for the nafls, he heard that a man was asking someone to lend him a prayer-carpet. Hazrat asked in an angry tone:

"Who requires a cloth"? Then angrily he said.' "Lift me. We shall say the nafls in the mosque" Thereafter Hazrat would perform the nafls of ahram in the mosque only; no occasion then came to pass that the nafls were performed on the open ground.

This is the perfect conformance to the Holy Prophet's ﷺ and his noble Companions' sayings and action May Allah Most High bestow a portion thereof on us also! Amen!

Sadaqah (Charity) Before Visiting the Holy Prophet's Tomb

Last year, on the occasion of the pilgrimage journey, while Hazrat was still in Mecca Mukarramah, some companions of his were going to Madina (Hazrat was to go to Madina Munawarrah later), he gave some money to them and said: "On reaching Madina, distribute it among the poor." Then addressing his attendants, in order to teach them, he said, "Do you know why have I given this sum to them? It is stated in the holy Quran:

'O ye who believe! When you hold conference with the messenger, offer an alms before your conference. That is better and purer for you.' (LVIII: 12)

Hence it has been my constant practice that before visiting I send something especially for the poor people of Madina. You should also be very careful to do so because it is very effective in cleansing the heart."

We have mentioned two, three things of this auspicious journey as a specimen. If his conformance to the Sunnah alone is written in detail, hundreds of pages will prove insufficient for it. Half-verse: "A ship is required for this shore less sea". Hence it has been mentioned above only briefly that no moment of his life passes contrary to the Sunnah and no action can proceed against the Sunnah.

The Eating of Barley-Bread for Following the Sunnah

Besides the various devotions, in eating and drinking also no Sunnah can be missed. As such, three years back, Hazrat got a quantity of barley flour and began to eat barley-bread for lunch. This practice continued for several months without fail, Hazrat, with great love and much relish went on eating the barley-bread with the intention of conforming to the Sunnah. Love makes everything easy, otherwise to mould life according to "the good conduct" part, the discharging of obligatory duties also becomes difficult without love. It is due to the same love that when a man once sent him a present of henna from the holy Madina, Hazrat said in his assembly (majlis): "Show me some way of eating it. What should be the way for eating it"? (So overwhelmed with love that he wished to eat Henna if it was possible).

The Sunnah Prior To the Khutbah of Al-Adha

The Sunnah practice on the day of 'Id al-Adha is that nothing should be eaten before the Khutbah and the meat of the sacrificed animal should be eaten after the prayer. Ordinarily Hazrat is not habituated to taking any breakfast in the morning. In the morning he takes only tea.

Hazrat's ascertainment was that there is prohibition for food while tea and pan (betel-leaf) are not included in food, and so he used to take tea and betel-leaf before the Khutbah.

But once the late Maulana Mufti Sa'eed Ahmed, Chief Mufti, Mazahir-e Ulum (Saharanpur) said that tea and betel-leaf too are included in food. From that day, in spite of the fact that Hazrat's opinion and ascertainment are against that (i.e. his opinion is that betel-leaf and tea are not included in food) he has given up taking both these things so that he may have acted upon both the statements and there may remain no doubt of missing a sunnah.

Care For the Sunnahs of Wedlock (Nikah)

The chapter on conforming to the Sunnah on festive occasions and marriages Hazrat has written himself in his Aap Biti, part iii.

At one place in this chapter he writes, 'I performed two marriages of my own, approximately sixteen, seventeen marriages of my sister, sister's daughters, son and grandchildren, and in each marriage Allah Most High did such favour unto me that I never felt whether I performed a marriage or said two rak'ahs of nafl prayer. Marriage was an act of devotion which people turned into a burden of ceremonies.

"The ulema have stated that two devotions are such which, beginning from Hazrat Adam (peace and blessings be upon him and on our prophet!) will continue till the Last Day, even in Paradise: the one is faith and the other is wedlock.

"The Noble Prophet ﷺ declared wedlock to be his Sunnah and said 'Wedlock is my Sunnah; he who avoids my Sunnah is not of me"!

But we people, having included many absurd things in this blessed Sunnah, have made it a great burden.

‘In the Holy Prophet's ﷺ and during the noble Companions' (may Allah be pleased with all of them!) period it had the status of a Sunnah only. There was not a scintilla in those days of these absurdities that we have mixed in it'

After this Hazrat has mentioned all the festive occasions and marriages at his place in a very delightful and soul-nourishing manner; it is worth reading and worthy of putting into practice. May Allah Most Glorious bestow upon us also the grace to conform to the Sunnah in each stage of life!

As stated earlier we wished to write about only a few events of Hazrat's conformance to the Sunnah, and not all such events and conditions of his life. If there is a biographer he can reproduce his entire life (which has passed in consummate conformance to the Sunnah) in the chart of perfect Sunnah; we had to write only a few events by way of a token of blessing.

Hazrat's Advice Regarding Conformance To The Sunnah

Now we conclude this topic with the respectable Hazrat's advice regarding conformance to the Sunnah.

He writes in one letter, "For future too my advice is this only that you should not be hesitant in trying to spread the Holy Prophet's and the noble Companions' way of life and should not care a row of pins if the worldlings consider you despicable and insignificant. Urdu couplet: - "The people may consider me deprived of dignity and sedateness but let him not think that I am not worthy of his banquet."

May Allah Most High bestow upon us the grace to follow and fulfil the respectable Hazrat's advice! Ameen!

Epilogue

As stated in the introduction, this book had been started on Friday in the holy month of Ramazan when I reported at Astana-e Khaliliah. Through sheer grace and favour of Allah and the blessing of the invocations and spiritual concentrations of my chief and spiritual director and master, the holy Hazrat (may his shadow never grow less!) these few pages could be written of which there was absolutely no hope because of this sinner's want of academic ability and knowledge. But due to Hazrat's miracle some pages were completed. May Allah Most Glorious keep Hazrat's Auspicious shadow, with all these graces and blessings, constant upon this ummah!

Today, on 27th Rajab, in the Night of the Ascent, I write these last lines and complete it. I am very grateful to those obliging friends of mine who, in this land of infidelity, lent me their books and the books of those institutions that are attached to them, at special concessions and for a long time by creating scope in their rules. May Allah Most Glorious, as beseems Him, reward everyone in both the worlds with the best compensation for whatever obligation they have done me in this work, and may make them and me the means of the popularity of this book and the revival of the Sunnahs, and bestow upon all of us and the whole umrah the grace to live in accordance with our Master and Sovereign of Both the Worlds, the Holy Prophet's ﷺ auspicious way of life!

‘And Most Blessed and Exalted Allah's blessings be upon "the Best of the Creation", our Chief, our Prophet, our Beloved Friend our Authority and Master, Muhammad the Unschooled Prophet, the Prophet of Mercy, the Master of the Lauded Station and the Fountain where people will arrive and the Great Intercession ﷺ, and "Then he drew nigh and came down till he was (distant) two bows' length or even nearer" (LIII: 8-9); and upon all the prophets and apostles; and upon all the angels and the angels connected with the religion, the world and the Hereafter, and the places where we will be buried and the lands where we committed sins; and upon all his descendants, Companions and followers, as much as they deserve and as much as You wish and approve and in such numbers as You wish and approve; equal to the number of those who remember and equal to the number of those who are forgetful about remembering You!’

And peace be on you!
Yusuf Sulaiman Motala,
Bolton, England.

A Brief List of Hazrat Shaikh Al Hadith Maulana Muhammad Zakaria's Urdu Works

1. *Faza'il-e Namaz.*
2. *Faza'il-e Quran-e Majeed.*
3. *Faza'il-e Zikr.*
4. *Faza'il-e Durud Sharif.*
5. *Faza'il-e Tabligh.*
6. *Faza'il-e Ramazan al-Mubarak.*
7. *Faza'il-e Sadaqat.*
S. *Faza'il-e Hajj.*
9. *Hikayaat-e Sahaba.*
10. *Islami Siyasat.*
11. *Ikhtelaaf-e A'imma.*
12. *Quran-e Azeem Awr Jabriyah Ta'lim.*
13. *Risala Strike.*
14. *Majmu'a-e Aap Biti.*
15. *Ikmaal al-Shiyam ma'e Muqaddama-e Hazrat Shaikh.*
16. *Irshad al-Muluk ma'e Muqaddama-e Hazrat Shaikh.*
17. *Khwan-e Khalil.*
18. *Khasa'il-e Nabavi ma'e Urdu Sharh-e Shama'il-e Tirmizi*

Books By Other Authors

'Sohbate Ba Awlia' by Maulana Taqi al-Din Nadvi Mazahiri, with Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi's Introduction. A fine collection of the Shaikh al-Hadith's discourses and statements which awaken the latent sentiment for self-culture, care for the Hereafter, and a feeling of faith and certitude. These also instil the mysteries of Tasawwuf and Ihsaan.

'Haqiqate-e Shukr' by Maulana Abdur Rahim Motala Surti. The reality about Divine Obligations and Gratitude